Fiction on the Fringe

NOVELISTIC WRITING IN THE POST-CLASSICAL AGE

Edited by
GRAMMATIKI A. KARLA

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PREFACE

With one exception, the chapters in this collection originated as papers presented at a workshop held under the title *Fiction on the fringe: Novelistic writing in late antiquity*, that took place at the Swedish Research Institute in Athens (November 2007).[1] All the contributions have been reworked by their authors for this book from the versions delivered at the workshop, and some of them have been thoroughly revised.

The broader objective that inspired the organization of the workshop was to bring to the centre of scholarly debate and research texts that have been described as novel-like or "on the fringe" of the novel. These are works traditionally excluded from the main corpus of the ancient novel and confined to the margins of the genre, such as the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander the Great*. But how are we to define these "fringe" texts, or in what context is one to understand the term "fringe" with respect to a literary genre, and, more specifically, the genre of the ancient novel? Among the various meanings listed under the entry "fringe" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, one is particularly relevant in our case—even though not originally intended to address the application of the term in a literary context. According to this definition "fringe" is "fig. ocas. in sense of an appendage or sequel". It is worth remarking that the term itself is not included in specialized dictionaries of literary terms; rather, its meaning is expressed by synonymous terms, such as "margin" or "marginality", which have been used in other contexts, most prominently by Jacques Derrida, and are notable for their strong sociological content.[2] There is also the term *fringe-theatre*,

[1] The workshop was arranged by the project "The Ancient Tradition", Uppsala University in collaboration with the University of Athens, and was generously funded by the Swedish Research Council.

[2] Hariman (1999) 40–42. "So marginality can be understood as the internal dynamic of social thinking used to generate verbal power, and as a limitation upon the words given social sanction, and as a condition of being for those words placed in the margin" (42).

referring to the performance genre that stages unconventional and experimental productions.[3]

Niklas Holzberg was the first to use the term "fringe" to characterize "other novel-like literature of antiquity", and under this category he ranked as complementary sub-categories utopian and fantastic accounts of travels (for example, Iambulus' *Sacred Inscription*), fictional biography (most famously the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life and Deeds of Alexander of Macedon*), historical novels in epistolary forms (like the *Letters of Chion*), the two fictional reports from Troy (known as the *Diary of the Trojan War* of Diktys and the *History of Destruction of Troy* of Dares) and Early Christian novel-like literature (for example the *Acts of the Apostles* or *Clemens Romance*).[4] Holzberg believed that it was necessary to group together texts of this kind into a special literary category because their narratives, even though indubitably novelistic in many key respects, nonetheless exhibit many substantial differences when compared to the texts that he would designate as mainstream, namely the idealistic and comic-realistic novels. The latter, Holzberg argued, "correspond closely to each other in their outward form, plot, motifs, and even in their ideology, if only in the sense that the one's is reversed in the other's"; while in the special or fringe-novels, one encounters "in every case only partial likenesses" (Holzberg 1995, 11–12).

Holzberg built upon this theoretical discussion in a later article (Holzberg 1996, 11–28), where he proposed the distinction between novels proper and the fringe, but his views have not been developed further. And while the biographies of *Aesop* and *Alexander*, for instance, have subsequently gained wide acceptance as novels or novel-like texts, they are typically set apart without any special term having been devised to describe their special literary generic status. It is true that certain steps in this direction have been undertaken, and in a number of recent studies on the ancient novel these "fringe"-narratives have received considerable attention. I should mention here the collective volumes of John Morgan and Richard Stoneman (1994), of Gareth Schmeling (1996),[5] and recently, the work of Luca Graverini, Wytse Keulen and Alessandro Barchiesi (2006), where a special chapter is reserved for the "fringe"

[3] Sinfield (1990) 480–484.

[4] Holzberg (1995) 11–27.

[5] Schmeling's view is worth citing: "Following the section on the canonical texts, we discuss in section thirteen works which are novel-like, that is works of extended narrative prose fiction which in many respects can be termed novels. They do not fit exactly into any genre classification but fit best into the novel category, and they are

novel under the title, *Narrativa "di confine"* by W. Keulen.[6] In any case, it is clear nowadays that no serious student of the ancient novel can profess ignorance of the existence of these texts, despite the lack of a generally accepted label (novel-like, "fringe", peripheral, marginal texts), or deny the necessity of studying and exploring these narratives side by side with the canonical novels, because in reality all of them are products of the same social and cultural environment.[7]

Conference organizers have contributed to this trend as well. In the published Proceedings of the third International Conference on the Ancient Novel (ICAN), which were appropriately given the title *Ancient Novel and Beyond*, one of the editors of the collection, Maike Zimmerman acknowledged that "the ancient novels, indeed, do have a future", and that this future depends on several "new trends" that emerged from the various studies presented at that conference. These principally focused attention on the comparative examination of the Greco-Roman novelistic tradition and texts of similar structure that come from other traditions, mostly, but not always, oriental in origin.[8] The same need for expanding the scope of the study of the novel is reflected in the

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included in this volume because they represent works closely associated historically and literarily with the canonical novel texts" (Schmeling 1996, 6–7).

[6] Nonetheless, the fact that they have adjusted their definition of the "fringe" novel to the study of a single text, while ignoring others, has been seen as a serious drawback that sets limits to a broader acceptance of their theory. See, for example, the review in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* by St. Tilg "In any case it is hardly representative, as no single text can be for a group of works that is by (lack of) definition heterogeneous. In view of the targeted audience this is an obvious shortcoming of the book. Students and general readers will not be able to flesh out the current notion of 'fringe novels' on its basis" (2006.09.22).

[7] Simon Goldhill's most recent words on the necessity to consider further the issue of retaining the same appreciation criteria for novelistic texts that today are studied indiscriminately as products of the same genre category, expressly the Greek vs. the Latin novels, are worth quoting: "A full picture of 'the ancient Greek novel' needs both to see how the different works spark off each other, creating and playing with reader expectations, and yet to recognise how precarious and porous the genre of the novel is" (Goldhill [2008] 199).

[8] Talks that pointed towards such new trends in the study of the novel, include those e.g. by E. Finkelpearl, "Lucius and Aesop Gain a Voice: *Apul. Met.* 11.1–2" and I. Nilsson, "Static Imitation or Creative Transformation? Achilles Tatius in Hysmine & Hysminias". Notably, Zimmerman herself acknowledged that, "it is to be hope that a next conference within a few years will show that new directions, aired for the first time at ICAN 2000, will have gained ground, and that at such a conference, again, as was the case in 2000, it will become apparent where the study of the ancient novels will be headed from the point onward" (Panayotakis, Zimmerman, Keulen [2003] xix).

title and general theme of ICAN IV: *Crossroads in the Ancient Novel: Spaces, Frontiers, Intersections* (Lisbon 2008). The workshop that took place last November in Athens set out to underscore and address precisely this need for expanding the scope of research on the study of the novel to integrate works which are proximal to the novelistic narratives, but which, nonetheless, have been confined to the margins of the genre.

The present volume comprises ten articles, nine of which were originally presented at the colloquium. In the paper that opens the collection, Helen Morales (*Challenging Some Orthodoxies: The Politics of Genre and the Ancient Greek Novel*) looks at some key ways in which "novel" and "fringe literature" are currently defined as literary concepts in contemporary critical approaches, and she wonders whether it is possible to identify specific criteria which one may use to insert clear boundaries between literary genres. She further observes that nowadays designating a literary work as "fringe" entails both advantages and disadvantages with respect to its critical reception; yet it is generally accepted that nearly all works—religious works excepted—of Greek imperial literature, including the erotic novels, are "fringe" literature when compared to those works which are taken to embody the literary canon. In her study the author argues that the privileging of certain works and the exclusion of others have significant ramifications for our understanding of the political operation of Greek imperial literature. Morales proposes that a formalistic approach to ancient fiction, an "imaginative mode", or rather, "a pragmatic and fluid approach to genre, one that is open to different alignments of texts for different purposes, will illuminate the individual works and their interpretative frames more fully than an approach that conceives of the genre in terms of a fixed 'core' and 'fringe'".

The novelistic biography of Aesop forms the central subject matter in three of the contributions in the collection, and rightly so: it is the *communis opinio* among contemporary researchers on the Greek novel that the Aesopic narrative does not conform to the rules that govern the definition of the genre of the ancient novel.

Grammatiki Karla (*Fictional Biography Vis-à-vis Romance: Affinity and Differentiation*), in the first of the three discussions on Aesop, compares and then contrasts the Lives of Aesop and Alexander the Great with the five extant erotic novels. The comparison is articulated on the basis of the structure and the communicative function of the text. More precisely, Karla surveys the plot, the narrative techniques (specifically, the role of the narrator, repetition, temporality and spatiality), and the

presence and function of common literary motifs in the two biographies and the novels. She further defines the distinct differences in the respective presentation and function of other elements, such as the erotic motif, the physical description of the hero, closure, themes of language and style, and also the broader issue of reception, and how in contrast with the novels the reception of the fictional biographies is determined by the peculiar nature of the composition of these "open texts". Karla's discussion is a comparative literary study which initially defines the characterization of the two Lives as "novelistic biography", but her ultimate goal is to clarify the points of intersection and separation between the two different groups of novels (the two Lives vs. the five erotic novels) by means of tracing key similarities and differences.

Corinne Jouanno's contribution examines the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance*, with respect to their relationship, firstly, to the erotic novels, secondly, to historical biographies, and, finally, to trickster stories. Through her comparison of the Lives to the erotic novels, she studies the narrative unity in the former. In her examination she takes into consideration the different parameters that regulate their composition, the frequent reuse of pre-existing material in both Lives, basic differences in the description of the family background and the physical appearance of the heroes, as well as the near absence of any love elements in both (the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance*). The comparison with the historical biographies (for example, Plutarch's *Lives*) shows the prevalence of fictional considerations over historical ones. Moreover the authors of the fictional lives create a narrative suspense which aims to intensify the reader's emotional participation, and the narrative stresses foremost the individuality of their heroes. Finally, the leading heroes in both biographical novels are prime examples of the trickster type, and as such, they share crucial similarities to each other, but their respective characterizations are also marked by clear differences. For Jouanno, the portrayals of the trickster heroes in the Lives of Aesop and Alexander invite the readers to receive them as projections of their own (the readers') personalities, and as expressions of their own (the readers') reactions.

The shadowy, peripheral nature of the erotic element in the *Life of Aesop*, differentiates it decisively from the so-called canonical erotic novels, a fact that is frequently noted in the discussions of both Karla and Jouanno. This striking thematic divergence is the exclusive theme of John Papademetriou's treatment (*Romance Without* Eros), which offers a comprehensive analysis of the various expressions of, and references to,

the erotic in the *Life of Aesop*. Papademetriou stresses foremost the narratological analysis and interpretation of the adultery episode involving Aesop and the anonymous wife of his master, Xanthos (chs. 75–76). The erotic relationship between slave and mistress is articulated not as an expression of emotion but as a purely sexual desire. In addition, Papademetriou demonstrates that the particular presentation of the erotic element in the *Life of Aesop* reflects clear influences from the genres of New Comedy, Satire and Mime, and, as such, he endorses the view that the *Life* presents a conscious parody of the true and genuine love that is idealized in the ancient romances. These conclusions establish interpretative parameters that are also applicable to the study of the other tales in the *Aesop Romance* that exemplify this particular type of unsentimental and purely sexual love, namely the adventure of Aesop's adopted son, Ainos (ch. 103), and three other ribald tales (chs. 129, 131, 141). The appendix that closes P.'s chapter tackles the Byzantine/post-Byzantine verse reception of the same motif in the story of the Widow and the Plowman (ch. 129), which in essence constitutes an alternative treatment of the story of the Widow of Ephesos. The numerous and pointed thematic parallels between this Byzantine recollection of the Widow of Ephesos, and the Latin versions of the same story, comprise an intriguing and as yet open question in the *Quellenforschung* of the *Life of Aesop*.

Tomas Hägg's study (*The Ideal Greek Novel from a Biographical Perspective*) forms an appropriate bridge between the Aesop sub-section and the rest of the volume. He embraces a very interesting methodological approach, by means of which he tries to illuminate certain basic and distinct characteristics of the "ideal" Greek novels through their comparison to "fringe" texts. These texts include the so-called biographical "novels" (certainly the anonymous *Life of Aesop*, and beside it, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, the *Life of Alexander* ascribed to Callisthenes, the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer*, and Philostratus' *Apollonius of Tyana*). Hägg's study focuses on the particular motifs of love and marriage, family and travel. His discussion makes clear that the novelist's choice to set the action of the heroes of the canonical novels inside a social environment that excludes the usual social and family obligations, serves to underscore the love motif. By contrast, it is a theme which, along with the marriage motif, the plot of the biographical "novels" conspicuously eliminates, emphasizing other traits of the hero's personality instead. The motif of travelling appears in the erotic and the biographical novels alike, but its integration into the narrative structure of the erotic

novel is seamless, and serves multiple functions, while this is hardly the case with journeying in the biographical novels.

Bernhard Zimmerman opens his contribution (*The Historical Novel in the Greek World: Xenophon's* Cyropaedia) with a discussion on the beginnings of the genre of the novel. By tracing in the ancient novels the presence of themes and motifs identified in the contemporary historical novel, he offers a definition of the term "Greek historical novel" and defines its principal characteristics, including dates, names, events and a series of cultural and historical (or quasi-historical) details of the past, and a preface with an overview of the content of the work. All these characteristics, initially listed as general features of the historical novel, are subsequently identified in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, a "fringe" novel of the mid-4th c. BC, a text in which all the dominant and secondary features of the novelistic genre present themselves in a variety of expressions. Thus, the *Cyropaedia* is infused with themes and motifs that echo simultaneously a historiographical account and an encomium, a love story, and a serious instructive diatribe from a teacher to his student, but both the temporal and geographical setting of these accounts are clearly different from the readers' everyday "reality". This becomes particularly conspicuous in the *Cyropaedia*, in the often playful fashion in which the various intertexts and model texts that stand behind Xenophon's novel interact with each other.

The two papers that follow, by David Konstan and Jason König, study the peripheral in the narratives known as the Acts of the Christian martyrs. David Konstan opens his "*Reunion and Regeneration: Narrative Patterns in Ancient Greek Novels and Christian Acts*" with the identification of a paradigmatic unit that relates successively the enamouring, separation and reunion of the young hero and heroine in the novels, and then discerns in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* the formation of a new configuration for the novel, namely the tight intertwinement of two distinct, independent story lines, that is "the romantic trials and tribulations of a pair of young lovers who are finally joined (or reunited) in wedlock, and a tale of wandering and discovery that leads to moral regeneration in a foreign place." The latter plotline recurs in closely parallel forms in other novelistic accounts (e.g. Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*), and is regularly adopted by Christian narratives of salvation, as may readily be concluded from studying two such proximal narrations of the 5th c. AD, the *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena* and the *Acts of Philip*. The beginnings of the motif whereby the protagonists undergo a spiritual transformation in the course of the journey that determines the direction of the plot

in these narratives, is in fact already present in other erotic novels as well, including the earliest of the surviving Greek novels, Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*.

Jason König (*Novelistic and Anti-novelistic Narrative in the* Acts of Thomas *and the* Acts of Andrew and Matthias), for his part, examines the relationship of the apocryphal Acts to pagan Greco-Roman culture, and in particular, to the genre of the ancient novel, from a different angle. His study focuses on two lesser known and little explored texts, the *Acts of Thomas* and the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias*, both of which he considers within the theoretical parameters of ancient fiction. These texts display in common, as one might expect, certain distinct thematic motifs (for example, seduction stories, ethnographical descriptions, grotesque imagery) with a typical novelistic plotline. Still, all these close and often striking similarities obviously suggest the uniqueness of these narratives, and mark out their inclusion in the category of "acts of literature" as a distinctive genre in its own right. Focusing primarily on two plot themes, the apostle's resistance to the threats posed by pagan practices of consumption and the apostle's practice of observation, which shows very little interest in the exploration of the foreign nations each apostle encounters on the way, this painstaking examination also points to the interaction in theme between these peculiar novelistic accounts and non-Christian Greco-Roman literature in general. The form of these texts often expresses a mixture of aloofness and aggression, and the texts themselves subtly affirm their separateness, their own generic affiliations, and their unique capacity to incorporate and transform typical and instantly recognizable patterns from the Greco-Roman narrative. Thus, in a very clever fashion, these novels invite two different models of reading, a novelistic one with the sensationalistic conventions of pagan narrative, and an anti-novelistic twin.

The paper by William Hutton (*Pausanias the Novelist*) was not part of the original collection of papers presented at the Athens workshop, but its inclusion in this volume enhances the importance of the "fringe", because it shows the same set of fringe thematics is to be found in literary narratives even further removed from/beyond the genre of the ancient novel, such as Pausanias' *Description of Greece*. Hutton advances recent trends in Pausanias scholarship by seeking to overthrow the traditional view of Pausanias as an author of a work best approached in isolation, independent of other literary texts and genres. He emphasizes instead the presence in the *Periegesis* of an extensive and complex intertextual dialogue with a number of other contemporary literary

expressions. Hutton focuses specifically on the various ways in which Pausanias' work interacts with the erotic novel. It is worth remarking that in books VII and IV, which flank the core of the work, that is the central books V and VI, the attentive reader comes upon narrative strategies, themes and motifs which are very close to the corresponding techniques and motifs of the erotic novel: these include the self-presentation of the narrator, tales exalting the power of Eros, tales of travel and adventure, tales of divine intervention. Further, the inconsistency that Pausanias' critics usually observe in the appearance of the narrator's persona in the *Periegesis* (e.g. the narrator's self-portrayal in book I vs. book VIII) evokes the ancient novel, whose authors seem to revel in sophisticated manipulation of the boundaries between author, narrator and character.

The volume closes with Richard Hunter's essay (*Fictional Anxieties*), which returns to the issue of the dichotomy of "center" and "fringe". Hunter ties these literary positions to the experience of the individual reader, and, as such, argues from yet another vantage point against specific delineations and categorizations. The identification of the same theoretical anxieties about "center" and "periphery" in contemporary literary fiction, Hunter opines, shows the diachronic character of the questions that underscore the ancient novel and determined the scope of this volume.

Overall, the authors set as a common objective the surpassing of the narrow boundaries of *Quellenforschung*, to see the literary dimensions and appreciate the literary appeal of texts like the *Cyropaedia*, the Lives of Aesop and Alexander the Great, the Acts of the Christian Martyrs, but also including Pausanias' account of his tour of Greece. Through comparison and contrast, intertextual analysis and close examination, we try to explore the boundaries of the dichotomy between the "fringe" vs. the "canonical" or "erotic" novel, and so to outline more clearly the generic identity of the texts in both groups. And we try to formulate a methodology of approaching "beyond the fringe", in order to demonstrate the individuality, the uniqueness in each of these works and the way they are best studied. As a collective project of approaches that embrace different methodologies and points of view, each contributor to this volume has followed his or her own peculiar theoretical approach. This polyphony of criticism is evident in the different ways each author explores the notion of "fringe", regarding both the thematics and the conception of the very word "fringe" as a literary term—polyphony that is reflected in the coexistence of strictly formalistic

readings (Karla) and interpretations that embrace a rather fluid approach defiant of generic labelling (Morales).

The need to produce a volume that was accessible to a wide audience, and, above all, the imperative to establish the "fringe" side-by-side with the canonical, necessarily limited the focus of our attention to a small number of texts. All the arguments advanced here may also be applied to the study of many other "fringe" texts mentioned here only in passing, such as the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, historical novels in epistolary form (see *Letters of Chion*), fictional reports of Troy (see *The Diary of the Trojan War* of Dictys Cretensis, or *The History of Destruction of Troy* of Dares Phrygius) and many others. The carefully prescribed scope of our study will, hopefully, help to bring the "fringe" from the periphery of scholarly research to the centre of critical attention, and provide methodological tools that can aid the exploration of other "fringe" texts in the future.

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CHAPTER ONE

CHALLENGING SOME ORTHODOXIES: THE POLITICS OF GENRE AND THE ANCIENT GREEK NOVEL

Helen Morales

1. *The lunatic (notions of the) fringe*

"I shall not today attempt to define further the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description," said Justice Potter Stewart when making a ruling about obscenity at the United States Supreme Court in 1964, "and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it . . ." "Novel", like "obscenity" is a commonly used term, yet notoriously difficult satisfactorily to define. Genre is a crucial organising category both for literary history, and for an individual reader's engagement with a text, but defining the novel proves a fraught enterprise. You could say that we know it when we see it.

Or do we? Even at the most basic level, attempts to categorise the ancient novel run into difficulties. This is, of course, not helped by the fact that there was no ancient term for, or theory of, the novel. Scholarly discussions tend towards gate-keeping: what to include and what to exclude from the genre. Do we keep the Christian works together with, or separate from, the "romance" tales? Is Pseudo-Lucian's *Ass* in or out? Can we brush Iamblichus' *Babylonian Tales* under the carpet?

This short chapter intends to look afresh at *what's at stake* in current conceptions of the genre.[1] The rest of this section will look at some key ways in which "novel" and "fringe literature" is currently constituted

[1] I am grateful to the participants of the seminar from which this volume arises, especially Grammatiki Karla and Ingela Nilsson. I am also grateful to Simon Goldhill for discussing some of the ideas presented here and for showing me a draft of his chapter on "Genre" in Whitmarsh (2008). On questions of genre more widely Beata Agrell and Ingela Nilsson's edited volume is a comprehensive and stimulating analysis: Agrell, Nilsson (2003).

(without attempting a systematic overview), and reminds us why it matters how we categorise a work. In the second section, I argue that the privileging of certain works and exclusion of others has significant ramifications for our understanding of the ideological and political operations of imperial Greek literature. A decade or so ago Tomas Hägg warned scholars of ancient fiction, quite rightly, that "our gravest mistake would be to construct a building using only the few scattered remains—and believe the result to be historically true."[2] An equally grave mistake, it seems to me, is to construct a building selecting some of the remains and discarding others, unless we can be certain of the difference between a foundation stone and a piece of rubble. The final brief section sketches some ways that might help us move forwards.

A typical approach is to create a typology of ancient prose narratives according to common motifs, subject matter and narrative structure. This usually results, as Niklas Holzberg outlines, in one of two models.[3] The first sees Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Longus, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus and the fragments of "similar works" as "novels", with anything else classed as "fringe". The second groups together Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Longus, Achilles Tatius, and Heliodorus, plus the Latin novels of Petronius and Apuleius alongside Pseudo-Lucian's *Ass*, and sub-divides these into two categories: "idealistic novel" and "comic-realistic novel". Anything else is "fringe". Holzberg comments on this:

> Very few scholars who look upon the eight texts named above, or only the five Greek ones, as a homogeneous group are absolutely rigorous in their differentiation between these and the "fringe". The vast majority is not opposed to styling the one or the other of these "peripheral" texts as "novel" too, or as "romance" or, at least something very similar. However, opinions vary widely as to which "fringe" text is still or nearly still a "novel" and which can no longer be regarded as such.

His terms reveal what a facile exercise this ultimately is. What is meant by "something very similar" to a novel? What does "nearly still a novel" look like? The inability to articulate the grounds for categorisation begs the very questions that the classifications are trying to solve. There is a kind of lunacy to this enterprise and yet it proves remarkably tenacious. The recent general work on the ancient novel, *Il Romanzo*

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2 Hägg (1983) 53.
3 Holzberg (1996).

Antico: Forme, testi, problemi by Graverini, Keulen and Barchiesi,[4] has a chapter on "fringe narrative" (narrativa "di confine") which it takes to be (though without justification) epistolary narrative (such as *Letters of Chion*), so-called novelistic history (such as the work of "Dictys of Crete") and so-called novelistic biographies (*The Alexander Romance*, *The Life of Aesop*). It treats Philostratus' *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* as a prime example of "fringe literature" but fails to address how, if at all, this text is paradigmatic of the other "fringe" works.

In a more thoughtful article, Tim Whitmarsh takes pains to ascertain the genre of the Greek novel through careful scrutiny of their titles.[5] Paratextual signs are, of course, important indicators of genre, and Whitmarsh argues that the novels were most likely to have shared the formula *ta kata* or *peri*+a girl's name, or girl's and boy's names (e.g. *ta kata Chloen kai Daphnen*: *The Affair of Daphnis and Chloe*). He is concerned to counter the long-standing hypothesis of Albert Henrichs that the titles of the Greek novels were typically historiographical in form (*Aithiopika*, *Lesbiaka*, *Babyloniaka*, etc.).[6] Toponymic elements do appear in the novels of Xenophon, Iamblichus and Heliodorus, but, Whitmarsh argues, they are not essential features of the novel's titles. The genre as he sees it therefore comprises: *ta peri Kallirhoes*, *ta kata Anthian kai Habrokomen Ephesiaka*, *ta kata Chloen kai Daphnin*, *ta kata Leukippen kai Kleitophonta*, and *ta peri Theagenen kai Charikleian Aithiopika* and any other works that might have existed with such a title. One of the potential challenges to his hypothesis, as he acknowledges, is Iamblichus' *Babyloniaka*, which the Byzantine bishop and scholar Photius (not always a reliable source) groups alongside Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus. Whitmarsh gets around this by arguing that even if *Babyloniaka* was the original title, "it is questionable whether this text belongs with the five extant novels". It is "longer", "more exotic" and "more grotesque": "Iamblichus is clearly operating within sight of the five extant novels, but the level of innovation and experimentation also takes him into a different zone altogether."[7] Into the "fringe", perhaps, although Whitmarsh does not use that term. I shall return to Iamblichus later on; for

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[4] Graverini, Keulen, Barchiesi (2006).

[5] Whitmarsh (2005).

[6] Henrichs (1972).

[7] Whitmarsh (2005) 602–603. See also Konstan (1994) 76 n. 39: "That narrative appears to differ in many ways from the so-called ideal romances that we have been considering. I have judged it unsafe to rely on this and other highly fragmentary texts in eliciting the pattern of erotic relations in the Greek novel."

now I just want to note the methodological moves made here. When the title of *Babyloniaka* suggests that it does not belong in the genre, the *differences* of its motifs, subject matter and narrative structure, are all stressed, bolstering the argument for its exclusion. Were clear evidence to come to light that *Babyloniaka* had originally been entitled *ta peri Rhodanou kai Sinonidos Babyloniaka*, would the similarities between this work and the others be stressed instead?

If Holzberg is right that most scholars will not mind too much if the odd "peripheral" text is slipped into the category "novel", then it's worth asking why so much energy is spent on typologising in the first place. What's at stake in these categories? One answer is that genre terms are terms of valorisation. "Novel" and "fringe" are status terms, with "fringe" implying something less important, less substantial, less central, than "the novels proper". Classicists have a lot invested in there being a coherent category of "the ancient novel", the predecessor or prototype of (arguably) the most important and influential genre of the modern era. "Fringe fiction", in contrast, is a category that is defined purely negatively. The works in it often have little to do with one another except that they are "like but not enough like" novels. "Fringe" is far from a value-neutral classification: to call a work "fringe" (usually) is to dismiss it.

Another answer would be that genre terms are ways of organising a reader's emotional and intellectual expectations. To argue that, for example, the *Acts of Peter* is a *novel* is to argue that readers will have certain expectations of the work.[8] Policing the boundaries—allowing some works in and keeping others out—is a means of ensuring that we can chart these expectations. It allows us to tell some rather neat stories about the ancient novel (as I shall discuss in the next section) that a more inclusive conception of the genre would not. Methodologically, there is a tendency for scholars to treat any work that does not conform to an easy pattern as a "fringe" text, or (another alibi for exclusion) as an *ironic* text, deliberately positioning itself against the "straightforward" and "mainstream".

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[8] See Thomas (2003).

2. *Fringe benefits—and disadvantages*

A benefit of mapping ancient narrative fiction into "centre" and "fringe" is that, at this historical moment at least, the fringe (whatever that may be) is hot property. The Edinburgh Fringe is now the largest theatre festival in the world, a fact that, at its inception, would have seemed paradoxical and undesirable. In academia in general there is an increasing interest in works that have previously been marginalised. The *Life of Aesop*, your time has come![9] And so the "fringe" becomes the "centre" . . .

However, there are considerable disadvantages to drawing the map this way. The first is that it presents a distorted view of the bigger picture. It is worth pausing to think about what Greek literature can be thought of as "central" in the imperial period. In the archaic period we can say that epic and didactic poetry were "central" with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* eventually achieving canonical status. Homer and Hesiod are acknowledged by many sources as "central" writers. That tragedy and comedy are central genres in the classical period is irrefutable. Literary, historical and visual evidence attests too to Plato's acknowledged cultural significance. "Centrality" was assured not least through institutions: public festivals and school curricula. The library in Alexandria provided a centre for Hellenistic literature. But if we were to ask what were the central works in the Roman empire, the answer is likely to be the works of Virgil, Horace, Seneca, Lucan and others: Latin literature, not Greek. The Greek texts that are central to the *enkuklios paideia* during the "Second Sophistic" are the major works of archaic, classical, and Hellenistic Greece, not those of contemporary authors.

Canonization of religious texts serves to demarcate and impose what is central and what is fringe, and the late second century CE saw the establishment of both the Christian canon, and the Mishnah, the written redaction of Jewish oral traditions that became part of the Talmud, one of the central texts of Judaism.[10] The differences between these two texts are telling about the very different ways in which canons can function to implement centrality. In the Biblical canon, divergent opinions

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[9] As this volume shows.

[10] The background to, and development of, the New Testament is still debated: Bruce Metzger's is an especially helpful study: Metzger (1987). The Mishnah is thought to have been edited in 300 CE by Rabbi Yehudah the Prince. On the Mishnah, and Jewish canons more broadly, see Halbertal (1997).

are censored, or harmonized. The Mishnah, in contrast, codifies controversy, presenting alternative viewpoints for debate.[11] Different kinds of canonicity, but both works involve the exclusion and inclusion of texts.

Religious texts aside, it is hard to discern centrality among Greek imperial writers. Plutarch might have a claim to have been a "central" author: He was born in Delphi, the centre of the Greek world; wrote on just about everything; engaged with Rome, but he's not (until later) widely acknowledged as such. He is not taught in schools, applauded by literary critics, quoted by Roman poets: all indices, we may suppose, of "centrality". We lack sufficient knowledge of Lucian to know quite how he was perceived: there is no ancient literary criticism on his works, nothing to give us crucial contexts for how they were performed and read (this lack, in itself, might be taken as evidence against his being considered a "central" author). Dio Chrysostom is in some ways central (his close relationship with Trajan, for example), but spends much of his career on the periphery, in exile. And so on, and so forth. In fact, it might be said that, apart from the religious canons, *all Greek literature of the imperial period is fringe literature*.

It follows that to talk of "centre" and "fringe" when discussing the ancient novel is somewhat misleading: *all* the ancient novels were "fringe" fiction. That we have no evidence that they made any significant cultural impact (until some time later), and were not widely recognised as a genre (as the terminological lacuna suggests)[12] confirms this. Mapping the novels into "novels proper" and "fringe fiction" implicitly suggests that the ancient novel is in some way "central" to the literature of its period(s), but there is nothing to suggest this. We have injected, retrospectively, the novel's status *in summa* in the 19th century and beyond into these ancient texts and, in so doing, have afforded them a centrality in Western literary history. But this is a greatness that has been thrust upon them, not one that they were born with. Latterly, the debates over modern canons have made an impact too. In the late twentieth century, in North America, critics of

[11] Halbertal (1997) 3–45.

[12] A whole range of works, including those we now call ancient novels were referred to by general and non-specific terms such as *drama* (action) and *plasma* (made-up story). This makes it all the harder to discern the genre in terms of a "social contract" (as Frederic Jameson defined it): a contractual agreement between the writer and a specific reading public.

university and school curricula (especially "great books" courses) urged that they be revised the better to reflect and affirm the interests of different social groups: gender, class and ethnic groups thought to have been excluded from the traditional canon. Relegating different *cultural artefacts* to the fringe meant relegating different *people* to the fringe. Ancient fiction, with its foregrounding of women and various cultural and social groups, (although arguably often concomitant with insistent Hellenocentrism and misogyny), provided an attractive body of material for revisionists to raid.[13] The ancient novels, like any texts, are not intrinsically valuable: they are afforded their worth through the (shifting) consensus of readers, critics and publishers. The revision of modern canons has increased anew the cultural capital of the ancient novels.

Moreover, Greek imperial literature, including the so-called novels, overtly and obsessively *thematises* (its own) marginality. We do not have "Roman Tales" or "Athenian Affairs", but Ephesian, Phoenician, Babylonian and Ethiopian Tales. Heliodorus' novel in particular is a sophisticated and urgent rearrangement of the cultural landscape.[14] It takes a woman rather than a man in the starring role, and an Ethiopian rather than a Greek, and makes Greece the margins of her journey and Ethiopia, traditionally on the periphery in Hellenocentric classical texts, the destination. In so doing, it takes a traditional, canonical text, the *Odyssey*, and rewrites it. Alciphron's fictional *Letters* are not written by senators and rhetoricians, but farmers, fishermen, and prostitutes. Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* features the canon of Greek literature, but breaks it down into fragment, anecdote and quotation. Antonius Diogenes takes his readers beyond the margins of the known world: to *The Wonders beyond Thule*. With respect to the literary and cultural landscapes they both inhabit and depict, Greek imperial literature insists that the old maps of centre and periphery be redrawn. In this context, "fringe" and "centre" are at worst, facile concepts; at best, fluid, shifting and contested. Our critical vocabulary might be better off without them.

The second is that some of the neat tales scholars tell about the ancient novel can only be held in place by marginalising works that would complicate these stories. For example, it has become an orthodox

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[13] See e.g. Selden (1998).
[14] See Whitmarsh (1998).

critical position that the ancient novels "have the feel of a Greek world independent, indeed oblivious of Rome"; they are set "firmly in a world without Rome".[15] Yet this can only be said if we discount those works that are very much concerned with Rome and are set firmly in worlds that dramatise the consequences of Roman imperial power. Pseudo-Lucian's *Ass* is a so-called "fringe" novel that is doubly marginalised when it is (as so often) treated simply as the crude model for Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. The *Ass* is concerned with contemporary Rome and with Patras, an area occupied by Rome. The narrative is told from the perspective of Lucius, an elite young man whose curiosity results in his metamorphosis into an ass. Through the dual perspective of man/beast, argues Edith Hall, the narrative creates a "double vision" that evinces a "deeply ambivalent perspective on the Roman provinces' relationships with the Roman imperial administration".[16] Hall takes the *Onos* to be unique among the Greek novels in its engagement with contemporary Rome but, in fact, another so-called "fringe" novel is even more so: Iamblichus' *Babyloniaka*. Almost halfway through this novel (according to the later summary of Photius—we only have this and a few fragments of the original work), after an excursus on magic and the magus and before continuing with the adventures of the primary couple, Rhodanes and Sinonis, the author presents some information about himself and his context:

> The author says that he himself is a Babylonian, and that he was schooled in the magic arts, and also in Greek culture and education, and that he flourished under Sohaemus, the Achaemenid and Arsacid, a king from a line of kings on his father's side, and yet who also became a member of the Senate at Rome and then a consul, and then a king again of Greater Armenia. This was the period in which he says he flourished. He expressly states that Antoninus was ruling the Romans, and that when Antoninus (he says) sent the emperor Verus, his adopted brother and son-in-law, to make war on Vologaeses the Parthian, he himself foretold the war: that it would happen and how it would end. And that Vologaeses fled across the Euphrates and Tigris and that the land of the Parthians became subject to Rome.[17]

A scholium in the margin of the major manuscript of Photius' *Bibliotheca* gives a different account, but one that has some crucial similarities:

[15] Swain (1996) quotations from pages 110 and 130.
[16] Hall (1995) quotation from page 51.
[17] Photius, *Bibliotheca*, codex 94 75b27–41.

> This Iamblichus was a Syrian by birth, both on his father's and his mother's side, a Syrian not in the sense of the Greeks who have settled in Syria but a native, knowing the Syrian language and living in that culture until a tutor, as he tells us, who was Babylonian, took charge of him and taught him the language and culture of Babylon, and their stories, of which, he says, the one he is now writing is an example. The Babylonian was taken prisoner in the time when Trajan invaded Babylonia and the sellers of spoils sold him to a Syrian. He was learned in the wisdom of the barbarians, enough to have been one of the king's scribes while he was living in his fatherland. As for Iamblichus himself, who knew his native Syrian tongue, and then learned the Babylonian language as well, he says that after that, through diligence and practice, he acquired Greek too, so as to become an accomplished rhetor.

The novel locates itself as having been written during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (who assumed the name Antoninus when he became emperor), sometime between 161 and 180 CE. It is framed with reference to the Parthian Wars: the hostilities between Rome and Parthia, the empire on the periphery of Roman territory. Differences in detail between the two accounts aside, we can ascertain that the action of the novel takes place in an indeterminate Babylonian past, and that it is framed by contemporary events of a Babylonian—and Roman—present. What this all amounts to, and the different ways in which one can read the politics of this work are the subject of a recent article of mine, and I will not rehearse that discussion here.[18] Suffice it to emphasise that it is clear that both the *Ass* and *Babylonian Tales*, far from ignoring Rome, are very much concerned with it and with contemporary politics. It is only by excluding them from the genre that we can say that "the Greek novel" focuses on Greece and ignores Rome.

3. *Beyond "the fringe"* ...

Where do we go from here? I would like to argue—without any great claims to originality—that we take a much more pragmatic and far less formalistic approach to genre than scholars of imperial and late antique literature often do. The evidence that we have suggests that there was no "traditional genre" of the ancient novel in Anders Pettersson's understanding of "traditional genre" as being "a type of literary work which is generally recognised within a culture, as a special type of

[18] Morales (2006).

work."[19] It is possible to argue from comments in Julian,[20] or Macrobius' commentary on Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*[21] that some theorists recognised significant divisions between one type of prose narrative and another, but lack of a commonly acknowledged generic term for "novel" in antiquity makes it difficult to convince that such divisions were more widely recognised within the culture. In the imperial period, I have argued, with the exception of canonical religious texts, there is no Greek work that is any more central, core, or "proper" than any other. If our search for genre is essentially an enquiry into how these different works were meant to be understood then it seems to me profitable not (solely) to turn to titles and structural patterns, but to think of the novel "less as a genre than an imaginative mode", as Peter Brooks has urged in relation to melodrama. By "imaginative mode", he means "a coherent mode of imagining and representing".[22]

If we take a formalist approach to ancient fiction then, say, *Callirhoe*, *Leucippe and Clitophon*, *Apollonius, King of Tyre*, selected *Controversiae* of the Elder Seneca, *The Life of Secundus the Silent Philosopher*, Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*, and the *Lives of Mary of Egypt* have little in common. They comprise two Greek novels, one "fringe" Latin novel (often thought to be a "translation" of a Greek novel), Roman rhetorical exercises, "wisdom literature" (another bogus category), a late antique poem and Christian biography.

However, if we look not just for formal properties, but for a kind of "imaginative mode" then we find important connections and convergences. Arguably all have a heightened sense of things, an exaggerated view of the world. All are concerned with boundaries and limits. All portray—and contest—simplified constructs of good behaviour and bad behaviour. All are concerned with (though in different ways and with different emphases) chaste women who are also represented as

19 Pettersson (2003).

20 *Epistles* 89B. Julian refers to "fictions … narrated in earlier authors in the guise of history", but it is far from clear that Julian would have considered the writers of the imperial period as "earlier".

21 1.2.7–8. This text, written towards the end of the 4th century CE, distinguishes between different types of narrative and refers to the works of Petronius and Apuleius as "narratives full of the fictional adventures of lovers" (*argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta*).

22 Brooks (1976 / 1995) viii. This is in some respects akin to Bourdieu's formulation of an "aesthetic": see Bourdieu (1984). On Bourdieu and ancient fiction see the introduction to Hansen (1988), but Hansen has not thought through the complexities of what constitutes "popular" literature in different periods of antiquity.

(or written through representations of) prostitutes.[23] We might want to say that a "novelistic" mode of imagination is one that both heightens and exaggerates things, that simultaneously reveres and degrades women, and that suggests that the domestic (the bourgeois relationships between ordinary (elite) husband and wife, parent and child, master and slave) as opposed to the mythic, is a place for the instauration of significance.

We might want to say that this mode of signification privileges prurience, usually permitted prurience ("permitted" because the social reordering of the world at the end of the novel makes the transgressions along the way allowable, for both characters and readers).[24] Whitmarsh observes that the titles of the novels indicate that the dominant characteristic of the novels "proper" is that they stage intrusions into private life. But the same could be said of the Latin novels, of *Hero and Leander*, of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, of *The Life of Secundus the Silent Philosopher* and other works whose titles do not fit Whitmarsh's scheme. An aesthetic of prurience transcends formal generic determinants like titles, and cuts across the boundaries of prose and poetry. Or we might want privilege other works and other aspects of those works. Geography and travel (and the toponymic titles may play a role here), for example, will give us different alignments across a different range of texts.

But let me be clear that I do not want to impose any new orthodoxy, or introduce another, alternative, checklist against which to judge individual works worthy of inclusion or exclusion. Rather, I want to suggest that a pragmatic and fluid approach to genre, one that is open to different alignments of texts for different purposes, will illuminate the individual works and their interpretative frames more fully than an approach that conceives of the genre in terms of a fixed "core" and "fringe". This seems to me, given the literary landscape of imperial Greek literature where, I have argued, almost everything could be called "fringe", to be most advantageous. However, in ancient fiction studies at least, the old models prove remarkably tenacious.

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[23] E.g. Callirhoe written through and against the courtesan Phryne: see Morales (forthcoming, 2009).

[24] See Hunter in this volume.

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CHAPTER TWO

FICTIONAL BIOGRAPHY VIS-À-VIS ROMANCE: AFFINITY AND DIFFERENTIATION*

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The term "fictional biography" refers to the narration of the life of a historical (or presumed as historical) personage, along with the use of many fictitious elements. This term has been introduced by N. Holzberg in his "*The Ancient Novel. An Introduction*", and according to the author, it defines primarily the following four works: the *Vita of Cyrus* (*Cyropaedia*) by Xenophon, the *Life of Aesop* by an anonymous author, the *Life of Alexander the Great* by Pseudo-Callisthenes, and finally, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* by Philostratus (Holzberg 1995, 14–19). In the first part of the present study a comparative reading of the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander the Great* will explore and justify why these texts are representative literary expressions of the genre of "fictional biography".[1] I will then compare and contrast these fictional biographies with narratives traditionally listed by literary critics under the so-called category of "romances" or erotic novels.[2] This category comprises a group of narratives, the earliest of which appeared towards the end of the Hellenistic era, and which revolve around the adventures of a couple of young star-crossed lovers, whose happiness is seriously tested as they suffer separation, undertake subsequent travels, are subjected to

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[1] For the *Life of Aesop* I use the text of version G (Perriana) as edited by Perry (1952); the text of the *Life of Alexander* follows recension A (ms. A) and is taken from Kroll (1958). When a different version is cited, this will be noted *ad loc*.

[2] I will refrain from explaining in detail why I believe that the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander the Great* should be grouped together, as this topic is amply discussed by C. Jouanno in this volume. Further, I should note that the treatment of all five novels as variant pieces of a single narrative model is no doubt generalizing, yet this reduction is often necessary when an argument with a different scope is developed within the limited space of an article.

violence, are captured by thieves and pirates, and, in short, are faced with a long series of trials, until they finally reunite to live happily ever after.

In recent years critics of ancient biography and the novel have repeatedly debated whether and to what extent the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander the Great* belong to the "fringe" of the ancient Greek novel.[3] Aspiring to address some aspects of this complex problem and by examining the two *Lives* mentioned above, I propose to look closely at the similarities and differences between the two literary genres (i.e. fictional biography and romance). The conclusions of my study will hopefully entail a more accurate description of the nature of their literary relationship. The ultimate goal of this comparative approach is to define the boundaries that mark off a literary biography (as exemplified in the *Lives of Aesop* and *Alexander the Great*) from the novel, and, accordingly, to justify the use of the particular term "novelistic biographies" for these texts.

In order to outline as fully as possible the distinct literary character of these two *Lives*, I shall attempt a close comparative analysis of their themes against the themes of the erotic novels. I shall focus first on the distinct way in which each of these genres fashions its plotline, and thus differentiates the novelistic biographers from the authors of the erotic novels. Subsequently, I shall move on to particular aspects of narrative technique (e.g. the use of the narrator, the different perception of time and space, the employment of literary motifs to serve different literary goals, the different way in which each genre perceives the ideal novelistic closure) and stylistic organization (the importance attached to the crafting of a distinct linguistic phenotype). The character of the readership that fostered the *Lives*, as compared with the typical novels, will come next under scrutiny, as I postulate that the former enjoyed popularity among a wider circle of readers (and probably also listeners). I have reserved for last a brief discussion on the employment of the characterizations "open" vs. "closed" text, as these are applied to the *Lives* vs. the erotic novels.

With respect to the plot, both *Lives* begin with a nucleus of history or of traditional legend[4] and embellish the life of their respective hero

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[3] See the introduction in Holzberg (1995); Hägg (1983); and Holzberg (1996) 11–28.

[4] While Alexander's legend certainly develops around a historical nucleus, the same is hardly the case for the *Life of Aesop*. It is an open question whether Aesop was truly a historical figure, and not some legendary character. None of the information about

with a plethora of invented tales and adventures. In the case of Aesop, these tales illustrate the intelligence and wit of a slave who manages to earn his freedom along with the admiration of his community. In the case of Alexander, the genius of the hero-emperor is highlighted through his strategic capabilities and military conquests. These plots, which are characteristic for fictional biographies, are also marked by the "fringe", or marginal use of the erotic element,[5] and, as such, bear little relation—or at least so it seems on the surface—to the plots of the erotic novels described in the introductory paragraph.

The fact that the plot of the romances evolves around a couple, while the biographies focus on a single hero-protagonist, immediately calls for a different narrative approach: the writer of a romance has to use special techniques because he needs to narrate the parallel adventures of two heroes. As the latter are torn apart from an early point in the story and follow separate courses, the action is split into two independent trajectories, which concern the respective experiences of the two lovers.[6] On the other hand, in both *Aesop* and *Alexander* we observe a predictable, straightforward and linear narrative by an omniscient narrator, even though in *Aesop* the sections of dialogue are proportionally larger compared to the descriptive accounts, whereas in *Alexander* the opposite is the case. Both texts, however, provide prime examples of the simple linear narrative technique.

In the *Life of Alexander*, besides the impersonal/supra-personal omniscient narrator there is also another "intradiegetic narrator"[7] whose stories are dispersed throughout the text. This "intradiegetic narrator" is Alexander himself, who frequently sends extensive letters and recounts in them his own adventures in the first person. The extensive presence of Alexander as "intradiegetic narrator" within the framework of the *Vita* at times results in reduplications which may disturb the linear flow of the narrative.[8] For example, in his letter to Olympias at 2.23 (p. 104, manuscript L, ed. van Thiel), Alexander reviews and describes his battles with Darius, including the Persian king's death—disclosing details

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him in the sources, even among the earliest dating back to the 5th and 4th centuries BC (Herodotus, Aristophanes, Aristotle, etc.), can be used to corroborate the historicity of his person.

[5] For a detailed discussion of this issue, see below.

[6] See also Hägg (1983) 178; Fusillo (1996) 281–288.

[7] For this term see Genette (1983) 90–93.

[8] On this issue, see Reiser (1984) 134.

which the supra-personal omniscient narrator has already communicated earlier in the narrative.[9] This effectively creates a narrative regression that interrupts the linear development, a phenomenon not found in the *Life of Aesop*. Still, this narrative technique is probably due more to the clumsiness of the redactor/compiler of the *Life of Alexander* than to deliberate effect.

Recapitulations are to be found also in the romances, but both their structure and their function in the text are markedly different.[10] Still, the similarities in the recapitulations in the *Life of Alexander* and those in Chariton's *Callirhoe*, are too marked to pass over, most strikingly towards the end of Chariton's work, where "a most comprehensive recapitulation complex" is set (8.7.3–8 and 8.7.9–8.11). In this section, before the people of Syracuse, Hermocrates and Chaereas present an overview of the plot of the entire romance.[11] Concerning the chronological framework, in *Aesop* everything is enacted within a time frame almost devoid of references to historical time, whether precise dates or mention of specific events (e.g. festivals, seasonal happenings) that would possibly help us to set an approximate date or identify a specific cultural context within which to situate the action in *Aesop's Life*. Certain, frequently used, general expressions of time in the text (e.g. "on that particular day") call to mind similar formulas, which typically are used in popular oral narratives. Time references in the *Life of Alexander*, on the other hand, appear to be more realistic: references to the hero's birth, for example, or to famous sayings he uttered at the age of twelve, while likewise detached from specific chronological markers, suggest at least an intent to place the action within an era distinctly different from that of the readers' own, and hence they are perceived as "historical" (the chronological approach in the *Life of Alexander* is very close to that observed in the *New Testament*).[12] Both these types of narrative techniques are starkly different from the more complex structural organization of each and every one of the five romantic novels, where we find a

[9] A similar case of repetition is found also in the older recension α in the text of ms. A. In his letter to his mother Olympias Alexander relates for a second time his encounter with the Amazons (3.27.6–8).

[10] For the recapitulations in Chariton, Xenophon Ephesius and Achilles Tatius, see Hägg (1971) 245–287. In Heliodorus the narrative technique is more complex, see Winkler (1982) 93–158: especially 137–158; Fusillo (1988) 21–24, 26–29.

[11] An interpretation of this recapitulation is offered in Hägg (1971) 257–259. On the narrator's voice in the ancient novel in general, see Fusillo (1996) 283–288.

[12] See Reiser (1984) 146–147, 157.

more personal and more elaborate approach to the writing of the story (we observe, for instance, the predominance and the sharp demarcation of the day-and-night phases, flash-backs, narration *in medias res* and multiple layers of narration).[13]

The designation of the space wherein the action unravels occupies as much a central position in the fictitious biographies as in the erotic novels.[14] Aesop is first transported from an unnamed place to be sold as a slave in Ephesus; he is then brought to Samos to be placed in the service of the philosopher Xanthos for a certain period of time; we later see him in the court of Croesus, and again back on Samos where he expresses the desire "to travel around the world" (ch. 101); in Babylon he serves in the court of Lykoros; as an envoy of Lykoros he travels to Egypt and meets King Nectanebo; and finally, after "travelling around the rest of the cities", he reaches his final destination, Delphi, where he fatefully meets his death. In the *Life of Alexander the Great* there are references to a great number of cities, which are conquered by the triumphant army commander. Fictitious and real conquests mix, and there is widespread confusion of dates and geography; for example, the invasion of Asia is interrupted by attacks in Italy, in Sicily and in Africa (1.26 and 1.30), but all the while the smoothness of the narrative flow is hardly affected.

Similarities are readily found also with respect to the literary motifs, which the two groups of novelistic narrative share in common, although there, too, it is not difficult to point out significant differences as well. Attempted suicides thwarted at the last minute, dreams and divinations, the exchange of letters, unruly crowds, the corruption of a servant or a friend and the decisive role of divine intervention are common motifs both in the *Lives* and in the erotic romances. Moreover, there are certain motifs which the *Life of Aesop* shares with the romances, but they are not found in the *Life of Alexander*. These include the buying and selling of slaves[15] and *Scheintod*, or more precisely, the entombment of persons

[13] There is, however, a notable exception to this rule: Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*, unlike the other romances, displays a simpler, even simplistic, narrative structure. On this, see O'Sullivan (1995), especially 30–98 and Hägg (1971) 308.

[14] On narrative space in the Greek novel, see Lowe (2000) 228–240 and Konstan (2002).

[15] For example, see chs. 12–15 and 20–21 in *Vita Aesopi*. For recent bibliography and further details about πρᾶσις Αἰσώπου, with a pertinent discussion on its relationship to the selling of Diogenes, see Konstantakos (2003) 110–111, especially note 50.

who are still alive.[16] On the other hand, the *Life of Alexander* shares its own set of motifs with certain romances, most notably Chariton's novel, *Callirhoe*; these motifs include wars and sieges of cities.[17]

The realization that the fictional biographies and the erotic romances belong to different genres takes shape only after a careful consideration of their most obvious differences. The erotic element, so prominent in the romances, is of secondary importance in the fictional biographies.[18] As already remarked, the love theme is not altogether absent from the *Alexander* and *Aesop* narratives. At the beginning of the *Life of Alexander* there is the love-story of Nectanebo and Olympias; in this, the expatriate pharaoh employs a variety of crafty contrivances in order to slip into the queen's bed and have sex with her, just like the wily adulterer in the erotic novels.[19] In the *Life of Aesop* (chs. 75–76) we have the episode of the erotic encounter between Aesop and his master's wife which is anticipated with plenty of titillating innuendos in the preceding chapters.[20] Still, when we come to compare the manifestation of the erotic element in the *Lives* and the romances, substantial differences readily come to the fore. Most notably, *eros* is situated at the core of the plot in the erotic novels; it is their basic theme and the driving force of their action. In the fictional biographies, on the contrary, the love-theme is marginalized, and is related in episodes of secondary importance, which either do not involve the central character, as is the case of the affair between Nectanebo and Olympias, or are of little significance to the development of the main plot, as happens with Aesop and his mistress. Secondly, in the romances the treatment of the erotic element is serious and dramatic, and sometimes even melodramatic. In the biographies it is contrastingly light-hearted and comical, mod-

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[16] Chs. 104 and 107 *Vita Aesopi*, which belong in the translated *Ahikar story*. On this topic, see Grottanelli (1987) 26–32. For "Scheintod" in the novel, see Bowersock (1994) 99–119.

[17] For example 1.27–29 *Vita Alexandri* (pp. 38–40, ed. van Thiel).

[18] Even the reference to the marriage of Alexander to Roxane, the daughter of Darius, is devoid of the erotic element, and is introduced, instead, in the context of the political negotiations between the Greeks and the Persians. Only near the end, when Alexander prepares to take his own life, and Roxane intervenes to save him at the last moment, can one perhaps detect some emotion; still, the text at this point is so mutilated that any assessment of its content is tenuous and outright hypothetical.

[19] See for example the contrivances of Dorcon in *Daphnis and Chloe*.

[20] A thorough analysis of this topic is given by J.-Th. Papademetriou in this volume. On the similarities between adultery tales and comic mimes, see Konstantakos (2006) 563–600.

elled after the brief, widely circulating love stories with graphic sexual descriptions, such as the *Milesiaka* composed by Aristeides in the 2nd century BCE or other tales of adultery,[21] and after the erotic mime (e.g. the mimes of Herodas or the adultery mimes of the imperial period).

The chastity of the heroes of the romances and their efforts to guard it are totally absent from the biographies of Alexander and Aesop. Also, the beauty of the heroes of the romantic tales, an impelling force in the action, is replaced in the biographies with the unsightly appearance of Aesop (*Life of Aesop* ch. 1), and the short stature of Alexander (3.4.3)—who nonetheless is simultaneously described as having the look of a lion (1.13.3). The biographers' insistant emphasis on the less than idealized physiognomy of their heroes—particularly prominent in the *Life of Aesop*, where the ugliness of Aesop and his status as a slave are repeatedly highlighted—could be seen as a deliberate effort to parody the depiction of the heroes of the erotic novel, who are typically handsome and of noble descent.[22]

Finally, the romances conclude with the traditional "happy ending", which translates of course as the reunion of the two protagonists. The biographies of Aesop and Alexander the Great, on the other hand, end dramatically with the deaths of their heroes. Aesop, accused of the theft of a holy relic, is convicted and sentenced to death by the Delphians.[23] Likewise Alexander falls victim to a conspiracy plotted by Antipater and is poisoned.

Likewise, there are significant differences in terms of language and style between the two *Lives* and the romantic novels. Without disregarding the distinct language and narrative style of each of the five erotic

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[21] See Weinreich (1911) and Konstantakos (2006) 565–580. Konstantakos suggests that this Aesopic story may also entail a gross parody of the stock motifs of idealistic love found in New Comedy or the erotic novel.

[22] For the contrast between Aesop's appearance and the dazzling beauty of the heroes of the erotic novels, see Papademetriou (1997) 17–18. On the link between the ugliness of the slave Aesop and Greek and Roman Comedy, see Jouanno (2005) 398–400.

[23] The epilogue in the *Life of Aesop* reads more like a statement of vindication ("they vindicated Aesop's death") rather than something along the lines of the blissful endings in the Lives of the Saints. It might be remarked that there is an older tradition that tells of Aesop's return to life (see Testimonia 45–48 in Perry (1952) 226, and on this, cf. Andreassi (2001) 220–225). This tale, however, has not been used by the author of the *Aesop Romance*. On the possibility of extracting historical associations from Aesop's adventure at Delphi, along with the full argument about the presentation of Aesop as "pharmakos" (scapegoat), see Wiechers (1961); Brodersen (1992) 97–109; Robertson (2003) 258–262.

novels, all five are composed in the Attic dialect, while their narrative style is distinguished by a set of largely common rhetorical figures of speech, poetic words/expressions, and frequent explicit references to previous literary works.[24] In the *Lives*, on the other hand, the language is a popular Koine[25] with many elements from the vernacular and borrowings from Latin.[26] The wide use of parataxis, the use of the asyndeton, the historical present, repetitions and other similar features of popular speech (*Volkssprache*), as well as the absence of complex rhetorical figures characterize these works and set them apart, linguistically and stylistically, from the erotic novels.[27]

The everyday language of these works renders their messages more comprehensible. Of these, one that emanates from all the texts examined in this paper is the unshaken belief in the existence of a divine power which controls and guides the fates of men. This power is manifest in all the actions of the heroes of romances. In the *Lives* of Aesop and Alexander the influence of this supernatural power is perhaps more indirect, or at least so it seems, since the two heroes achieve successfully their goals as a result of their superior intelligence or genius.[28] The divine or the supernatural, nonetheless, still has a part to play in the *Lives*: as made clear at the end of each *Vita*, the destinies of both Alexander and Aesop, from their birth (in the case of Alexander the Great) to their death, have been predetermined according to the plan of some higher power.[29] Certainly, in the *Life of Aesop*, the central anti-

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[24] Zanetto (1990a) 147–148 and Zanetto (1990b) 233–242.

[25] Holzberg (1992b) 39, has argued that the simple language in the *Life of Aesop* is, in effect, employed consciously by the author, either as a contrast to the complex mode of expression of the Greek orators and philosophers or as a parody of the formal language of epic.

[26] For the language in the *Life of Aesop*, see Papademetriou (1987) 15–18; see also the specialized studies by Hostetter (1955) and Stamoulakis (2006). For the language in the *Life of Alexander the Great*, see Wyss (1942), and also the comparative study of the language of *Alexander the Great* and the *Gospel according to Mark* by Reiser (1984) 135–143.

[27] It must be observed that the language and style of both works are not homogeneous, a fact that probably betrays the diverse sources that have been incorporated. For example, see the poetic language of ch. 6 of the *Life of Aesop* (*locus amoenus*). For a more analytical treatment of this chapter, see Mignogna (1992).

[28] The reply by Candace captures this well: Ἀλέξανδρε, εἴθε ἦς μου καὶ σὺ υἱὸς καὶ διὰ σοῦ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν κατεκράτουν· οὐ γὰρ πολέμῳ ἐχειρώσω τὰς πόλεις ἀλλ' ἀγχινοίᾳ πολλῇ (3.23.8).

[29] Something expressed distinctly in both works: ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδένα θνητὸν νικῆσαι τὴν εἱμαρμένην (*Life of Alexander* 1.14.6), τοιγαροῦν τῷ Αἰσώπῳ πάντα ὑπηρετεῖτο τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν δωρηθέντα αὐτῷ (*Life of Aesop* 2.8–9), νῦν ἐγὼ θνητὸς … ὢν πῶς δυνήσομαι τὸ μέλλον ἐκφυγεῖν; (*Life of Aesop* 128.25–26).

hero is more in control of his own destiny thanks to his superior intelligence, and as such, the story has a wider social appeal. Right from the very beginning, Aesop is called βιωφελέστατος (a great benefactor). Many episodes and anecdotes (especially in the first part) conclude with a maxim,[30] and generally the fables in the *Life of Aesop* betray the didactic character of the work. In the words of Papademetriou: "Despite some questionable deeds, on the whole Aesop can be held up to the society as a model worth emulating ... Aesop's character easily fits in with a didactic vein that runs through the *Aesop Romance* ...".[31]

The same holds true for the *Life of Alexander*, where the φρενήρης Alexander,[32] emperor of the world, accomplishes his great deeds through the power of his genius. But the king's transgression against moderation, namely, his overstepping the boundaries of human capability, is punished by the divine. Finally, one may mention the ethical-philosophical dimension that distinguishes both *Lives*, since the theories and teachings of various philosophical Schools (Cynic, Stoic, Pythagorean, Platonic, etc.) infiltrate, admittedly in rather simplistic fashion, the various experiences of the heroes, and influence them to become more human and less distant to the common people.[33]

The didactic character of both biographies leads to yet another major question: to whom were these works primarily addressed? With respect to the audience of romantic fiction, many opinions have been expressed, and discussion continues up to the present day.[34] It is my belief, however, that the alleged wide popularity of the romantic story needs to be reassessed; criticism on this issue is sharply divided between those who consider the romances as light reading for a small circle of elite, educated readers, and those who argue that the same texts were addressed to a wider audience. A serious and, in my view, convincing effort has been mounted to arrive at a solution that stands somewhere in between, and identifies with the theory that views the erotic novels

[30] For example: ἔγνωσαν ἀσφαλῶς ὅτι ὁ κατὰ ἄλλου μηχανευόμενος κακὸν αὐτὸς καθ' ἑαυτοῦ τοῦτο λανθάνει ποιῶν (*Life of Aesop* 3.12–13), ταχὺ γὰρ ὁ περὶ εὐσεβείας λόγος εἰς τὰς τῶν θεῶν ἀκοὰς καταντᾷ (*Life of Aesop* 5.4–5).

[31] Papademetriou (1997) 68.

[32] On φρενήρης Alexander, see Jouanno (2002) 207, with relevant bibliography in note 113. In general about the personality of Alexander in the *Vita*, see *ibid.* pp. 191–243.

[33] For the Cynic elements see Adrados (1978) and Adrados (1999) 677–681. For the philosophical echoes in the *Life of Aesop* in general, see Konstantakos (2003) 108–111.

[34] E.g. Bowie (1994); Stephens (1994); Morgan (1995); Bowie (1996); Bremer (1998) 171–178; Hunter (2008).

as attractive reading, addressing alike the educated reader and a wider, largely uneducated community—the theory of *orality*.[35]

Bowie's concept of "actual" and "intended" audience offers a valuable methodological device to approach the issue of the audience of the two *Lives*.[36] According to Bowie, the "actual audience" is the person who actually read that text; the "intended audience" is the reader whom the author had in mind as he was writing that text. In order to identify, with respect to *Alexander* and *Aesop*, this "intended audience"[37] we need to pay close attention to the specific characteristics of language, structure and content of these texts, which overall are much less sophisticated in comparison to the erotic novels.

Focusing on the issue of content (language and structure have been discussed earlier in this paper), the *Life of Alexander the Great*—with its numerous tales of wondrous fantasy, its succession of adventures, the vivid descriptions of conquests, the anecdotes that ascribe all sorts of accomplishments to Alexander's intelligence, the moral superiority of the hero over his barbarian opponents—makes clear that the narrative aspires to reach a specific public, "... un pubblico amante dell'esotico, del sensazionale, del miracoloso".[38] This audience would have been not merely a public able to identify and eager to follow the various moral teachings of this work, but also one that expected to be entertained by reading it in written form (as *Unterhaltungsliteratur*) as well.[39] The biographer consciously tries to instil in his audience a sense of *ekstasis*, a ponderous and charged term.[40] And the following phrase may well represent an indirect acknowledgement of this intention: πλαστὸς ἀεὶ μῦθος, ἐὰν σχῇ πίστιν, ἐκστῆναι πεποίηκε τοὺς ἀκούοντας (*Life of Alexander* 2.15.5).

[35] Hägg (1994) 66–67.

[36] Bowie (1996).

[37] See Flaschka (1977) 43.

[38] Gallo (1996) 239.

[39] An indicative example is the abundance of etymologies and derivatives contained in the *Life of Great Alexander*—a playful indulgence of the author who aims at pleasing his audience. See e.g. Παρατόνιον (1.31.1), Ὑπόνομος (1.31.9).

[40] See *ekstasis* in Longinos 1.3–1.4; also the discussion of *ekstasis* in Didymos: ἔκστασις ... δηλοῖ γὰρ καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ θαυμασμῷ ἔκπληξιν, καὶ τὸ ἔξω τῶν αἰσθητῶν γενέσθαι (39.1677 A, PG) (the term *ekstasis* ... signifies ... the wondrous amazement, in which the individual is transported beyond his senses). Cf. the usage in Aristophanes' *Frogs*: Euripides accuses Aeschylus of creating *ekstasis* in his audience: ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκομπολάκουν ἀπὸ τοῦ φρονεῖν ἀποσπάσας, οὐδ' ἐξέπληττον αὐτούς, Κύκνους ποιῶν καὶ Μέμνονας κωδωνοφαλαροπώλους (961–963, ed. Dover).

Mutatis mutandis perhaps this is what the whole work is trying to achieve. The *Life of Alexander* recounts fantastic adventures of the hero with a dose of verisimilitude for the sake of credibility, and, as such, inspires with ecstasy the members of what may be a diversified audience. The mosaic of the audience that found themselves attracted to the *Life of Aesop* should not have been much different. The humorous stories, the myths, the impossibilities (ἀδύνατα), the novellas, the daily-life situations, even the ridicule at the expense of the philosophers, all go to show that the *Life of Aesop* was primarily directed at a popular audience, without precluding that more erudite readers also might have enjoyed the story and the jokes.[41] The symposiastic scenes described in the *Life* may capture, as in a snapshot, a small part of this audience. Clever anecdotes and humorous stories were popular topics of conversation at the various philosophical gatherings. The following excerpt from ch. 47 is a good example:

> As the drinking went on, there was extended conversation, and as you might expect among men of scholarly interests, all manner of questions were brought up. One of the students said, "What circumstance will produce great consternation among men?" Aesop, standing behind his master, replied, "If the dead were to rise and demand back their property."[42]

Now in order to determine the identity of the actual audience of these works, we have to rely primarily on indirect evidence. The codices via which the *Life of Aesop* was handed down to us contain, among other things, similar works, such as the *Fables* or the *Sayings* (*Γνῶμαι*) of Aesop, the *Sayings of Syntipas*, the *Life of Alexander the Great*, the *Physiologos*, *Stephanites and Ichnelates*—popular texts, in other words, wherein edification and entertainment constitute the basic, joint goals.[43] Quintilian (5.11.19) "mentions rustics and illiterates as being enthusiastic listeners to Aesopic Fables".[44] Quintilian's description might refer to the main audience of the *Lives* as well. In short, the *Lives* were addressed to groups of people who could not read, but largely consisted of listeners to public reading or oral performance.

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[41] Hägg (1997) 196. On the same issue, see Hopkins (1993) 11–12.

[42] Translation is from Daly (1961) 54.

[43] As to whether one should consider all these works as *light literature*, *letteratura di consumo*, *paralittérature* or *Trivialliteratur*, see Pecere, Stramaglia (1996), as well as the short discussion in Andreassi (1997) 18–20.

[44] Scobie (1979) 230.

The wide diffusion of the *Life of Alexander* and the *Life of Aesop* to countries both east and west, from the middle ages to the present times, and the literary influence which they exerted are perhaps the greatest evidence for the popularity of these works.[45] This may not be unrelated to another set of basic characteristics shared by both works, namely, that both are by anonymous authors, both have spread widely in similar ways, geographically and over time, and both have had a lasting appeal. In other words, both *Lives* belong to the category of "open texts"[46] and "illustrate a striking degree of structural fluidity".[47]

Naturally these are characteristics interrelated with the way these works were created. Almost all the adventures of Aesop and Alexander draw on pre-existing material that was circulating independently before the composition of the actual works. Moreover, it has been remarked that both works contain indications of stratification of various sources enriched with material from older literature and popular oral tales. Very briefly, we can say that the *Life of Aesop* is made up of: (a) legends about Aesop's life as a slave, several of which must have been in circulation at least since the 5th or 4th century BCE; (b) countless tales and anecdotes[48] about other individuals, which circulated orally or in writing, in historical works, biographies, treatises, anthologies, etc.; many stories about Hesiod, Diogenes, Socrates, the Seven Sages and other philosophers were transferred to Aesop by the author of the *Life*;[49] (c) a version of the *Narrative of Ahikar* that circulated in Aramaic as early as the 5th century BCE, in demotic Egyptian since at least the Ptolemaic period and in Greek perhaps since the 4th century BCE;[50]

[45] The reception of these works also shows that it was not just the illiterate but also the literate who appreciated them. The highly educated 13th c. Byzantine scholar Maximos Planudes was particularly fond of these popular narratives; see details in Karla (2003). A rich bibliography on the dissemination of the *Life of Aesop* can be found in Beschorner, Holzberg (1992); for its influence, see Holzberg (1993); Papademetriou (1997). On the dissemination of the *Alexander Romance*, see Stoneman (1996); a general overview is provided also in the acts of the Conference on Alexander the Great: Harf-Lancner, Cappler, Suard (1999) (non vidi).

[46] Konstan (1998).

[47] Thomas (1998) 282. The episodic character of these texts, which distinguishes them from the erotic novels, is noted in Konstan (1998) 124.

[48] Merkle (1996).

[49] For the influence of the traditions about the Seven Sages on the *Life of Aesop*, see Konstantakos (2004), with full bibliography at pp. 102–103.

[50] On this issue, see Konstantakos (2008) I 23–36, 158–166, II 17–81, 225–270; also Kussl (1992); Marinčič (2003) 53–70, and for additional bibliography, Beschorner/Holzberg (1992) 177–178.

(d) the legend about the death of Aesop at Delphi, which was already circulating widely in the 5th century BCE;[51] (e) popular oral tales, such as the story of widow of Ephesus; variations of this novella[52] are also found in Phaidrus and Petronius, both deriving from the *Milesiaka* of Aristeides.[53] Some of the legends about Aesop (such as those concerning his life on Samos or those about his death at Dephi) may also have been included in the biography of Aesop that prefaced the collection of fables by Demetrios of Phalerum.[54]

The *Life of Alexander* consists of: (a) the narrative about Nectanebo and Olympias, which is based on Egyptian popular traditions and possibly translates or adapts an earlier Egyptian folktale; (b) a report of Alexander's historical achievements and battles, taken from some historical source that dates from the Hellenistic period; (c) a collection of imaginary letters by Alexander, which very probably had already been circulating as an independent work; (d) other minor, independent narratives about Alexander, such as the dialogue between the king and the Naked Philosophers, the narrations of his death and his will, the story about the building of Alexandria, etc.; (e) various stories about the wondrous adventures of Alexander in fabled lands of the East, stories that may have originated in tall tales told by imaginative veterans of Alexander's military campaigns and subsequently acquired literary fame through paradoxographic works such as those of Onesikritos.[55] Some of these stories were much earlier in origin and referred to the deeds of other heroes, before they were transferred to the person of Alexander (e.g. the very old story of the king's flight with the birds, which is also told about various Eastern kings, such as Etana and Kai Kaus).[56]

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[51] Generally on the sources of the Aesop-Romance, see Holzberg (1993) 7; West (1984); Perry (1962) esp. 332–334; Zeitz (1936); La Penna (1962); Adrados (1999) 659–673.

[52] It is characterized as novella or anecdote. See La Penna (1962) 310; Adrados (1979) 108; van Dijk (1995) 141–142. Merkle (1996) 226–227 calls it "novella-like". For the distinction between anecdote, fable and novella, see Merkle (1996) 215–216.

[53] See Papademetriou in this volume and Adrados (1999) 658. For extensive bibliography on the *Milesian Tales*, see e.g. Harrison (1998); Ferrari/Zanetto (1995).

[54] Perry (1962) 332–334. For a different opinion, see Adrados (1999) 649–654.

[55] For the sources of the *Alexander Romance*, see Merkelbach (1954 / 1977); van Thiel (1974) XIII–XXIX; Stoneman (1991) 8–17.

[56] A detailed discussion of this subject is found in Konstantakos (2008) 83–122, 277–298. For the testimony of papyri to the existence of independent stories that were later incorporated in the *Alexander Romance*, see Papathomas (2000) 219.

From the above, it is evident that the fictional biographies of Aesop and Alexander are, to a great extent, compilations from pre-existing independent, shorter texts. This is a fundamental characteristic that the two texts have in common, and one that distinguishes them from the erotic novels, where the basic form of the plot (love—obstacles—separation—final reunion) may be traditional and standardized, but the storyline and the individual episodes are largely the author's original creations, not pre-existing tales. Even though the romances may themselves present similar features, such as popular literary motifs or some traces of popular oral narration,[57] they are, for the most part, clearly acknowledged as the work of a specific author, who integrates them into his own narrative design. On the contrary, the *Lives* of Aesop and Alexander follow their own rules, common to both these works, with respect to narrative construction: their texts result from the amalgamation of many older texts and traditions, and this is responsible, at least to some degree, for the "open" character of their narration. Since these texts were constructed by the welding or interweaving of older, independent materials, they were apt to receive further embellishments by subsequent adapters in the course of their later transmission. Precisely because the later adapters were aware that the work before them was composed of pre-existing texts or traditions, they felt free to follow suit and add more yarns and tales themselves. Thus, they augmented the text by interpolating more stories about Aesop and Alexander derived from material widely current but not yet amalgamated into the version used by these adapters, or by transferring to their heroes stories originally told about other persons.

In the light of the above, we could say that the basic difference between the erotic novels and the *Lives* of Alexander and of Aesop is that the former are works which trace a definite course in the history of literature as "closed texts" and have been composed by a known author,[58] whereas the latter present a dynamic resistance to fixity: being

[57] See Scobie (1979) 251–259; O'Sullivan (1995) 69–98.

[58] It has been recently argued that the erotic novels, too, were transmitted in more than one textual version, so we can talk about "multiple versions in the Greek novel" with respect to these texts as well. On this, see Sanz Morales (2006) and (2008). Nonetheless, it is my belief that the variants in the texts of the erotic novels are far fewer than those printed in the texts of the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander*, and they do not vary to any great degree among themselves, in the sense that each records a different narrative.

stories both without authors and without standard texts,[59] they are "open works". The anonymity, the stratification of the various sources, the episodic character and generally the fluidity of the narrative structure, the widespread geographic distribution, the abundance of translations and versions, and the chameleonic way in which they were transmitted and have come down to us, constitute some of the basic characteristics of "open texts".[60]

The question to be addressed, then, is whether, despite all the dissimilarities between fictional biographies and erotic novels, we can still apply similar methodological approaches to both genres. If we postulate the existence of a carefully planned structure in the *Lives* (as has been attempted for the *Life of Aesop*),[61] the specific text embodying this structure acquires stability, and in this respect its texture resembles that of a dramatic narrative or some other literary product which belongs to a genre category comprising texts that are "closed". The acceptance of a specific, primary textual structure, however, suggests that the other variant texts should be considered inferior, and that with the addition and subtraction of episodes from these inferior texts, the narrative structure of the original text is lost or diluted. Still, if such a primary text exists, is it possible to identify it? Version G of the *Aesop Romance* is perhaps closest to the hypothetical archetype, but this manuscript is not the original, as papyrus fragments embodying different traditions attest.[62] Thus, to reach the archetype, we need to advance a new hypothesis, namely, that the version represented in the G manuscript has been subject to the intervention of some "authoritative" educated transcriber, or that the original written version of the story featured already all the narrative techniques posited for the archetype which the transcriber adopted and passed on intact in his own version.

Nevertheless, the transmission of the *Story of Aesop* shows that the various versions or translations which did not possess or respect a prescribed and strictly regulated narrative structure were far more widely disseminated than the G version. If this is something that we can safely agree upon, then we may argue that these texts carry from their origins (written all over their very genetic make-up, so to speak) those characteristics that make them apt to continual alteration in the process of

[59] Thomas (1998) 289.
[60] See also Fusillo (1994) 239.
[61] Like the study of Holzberg (1992b).
[62] On this issue, see my article "Die älteste Version des Äsopromans" (forthcoming).

their transmission. Is it just by chance that these texts are composed of such a great number and diversity of other texts? Is the popularity they enjoyed and the great influence they exercised to be held as purely coincidental?

Leaving this question open, let us return to the question posed at the beginning of this discussion regarding the literary relationship between the erotic novels and the fictional biographies, the limits of their proximity, the points where they overlap and connect to each other. Are we to locate the fictitious biographies on the "fringe" of the erotic novel, and so accept that both biographies and erotic novels belong essentially to the same genre? Both literary categories involve narrations that are at once fictitious and credible. If we accept that these two characteristics constitute inherent traits of the novel, it would not be unreasonable, as far as their literary genre is concerned, to label the *Lives of Alexander the Great* and *Aesop* as "novelistic biographies".[63] By substituting the term "novelistic" in place of "fictional", we add more specific characteristics to these biographies, and by this we ascertain that they do not belong to the "fringe" of the erotic novel. I believe that even if there are certain common traits between the erotic novel and novelistic biographies, the two still constitute separate literary genres with different characteristics and distinct literary itineraries.

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[63] For bibliography, see Karla (2001) 1–3.

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CHAPTER THREE

NOVELISTIC LIVES AND HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHIES: THE *LIFE OF AESOP* AND THE *ALEXANDER ROMANCE* AS FRINGE NOVELS

Corinne Jouanno

The existence of affinities between the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance* has been remarked more than once, and in recent critical approaches to the ancient novel, both works are viewed together—as examples of "fringe" novels.[1] Ancient readers too were certainly conscious of the similarities existing between the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance*, for the two works have been copied together in some medieval manuscripts.[2] The presence, in both texts, of the same character, Pharaoh Nectanebo, who is Alexander's father in the *Alexander Romance*, and an enemy of the Babylonian king Lykourgos in the *Life of Aesop*, even suggests the possibility of some mutual influence—perhaps of the Alexander legend upon the *Life of Aesop*, for the story of Nectanebo seducing Philip's wife had been circulating a long time before the emergence of the *Alexander Romance* as a fully-constituted text in the 3rd century AD. And it seems quite probable that exchanges continued throughout the centuries, for we can see the emergence of other common episodes in later versions of the *Life* and the *Romance* (specifically, I think of the story of Alexander's ascension and of the apophthegms uttered by the hero in the *lambda* version of the *Alexander Romance*).[3] But here I shall limit myself to the examination of the

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[1] I would like to thank Ingela Nilsson and David Konstan for generously helping me to improve the English text of this paper.

See Holzberg (2006) 26–30 ("Romanhafte Biographie").

[2] In the *Leid. Vulc.* 93 (XVth c.) we can read both the β recension of the *Alexander Romance* and the W version of the *Life of Aesop*; in the *Par. Gr. Suppl.* 690 (XIth c.) have been copied abstracts from the β recension of the *Alexander Romance* and Aphthonios' *Life of Aesop* (as a preface to the Aesopic fables). It must be added that Julius Valerius' Latin translation of the *Alexander Romance* is entitled *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis translatae ex Aesopo graeco*—another proof of the affinity felt by ancient readers between the *Alexander Romance* and the Aesopic world.

[3] Alexander's ascension is to be compared with the episode of the ethereal tower

earliest transmitted versions of the two works, the *alpha* recension of the *Alexander Romance* and the Grottaferrata version of the *Life of Aesop*.[4]

1. *Non-canonical novels … in form and content*

1.1. *Unconventional form*

When compared with the canonical Greek novels, the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance* appear to be strongly deviant works. Whereas each of the "big five" may be said to be the product of a single mind which created the whole work, plot and wording alike, things are quite different in our texts, whose anonymous authors did not build their works out of nothing, but reused a lot of pre-existing material, some of which had been circulating independently for a long time. I shall go over this point briefly, since it has been studied at length, among others by David Konstan and by C.M. Thomas.[5] The result of such a process of amalgamation is, of course, a composite work, what we may call a "patchwork novel", made of heterogeneous elements (the fables, or the story of Akhikar in the *Life of Aesop*, the Letter of Alexander to Aristotle, the story of his encounter with the Gymnosophists, or his Last Will in the *Alexander Romance*). Such a lack of unity makes further additions or subtractions all the easier, so that each retelling of the story tends to produce a new version—as attested by the textual tradition of the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance*, with their multiplicity of recensions and sub-recensions: fluidity is the main characteristic in the transmission of this kind of text.

1.2. *Unconventional heroes*

The heroes of such unconventional works stand far apart from the idealistic norm of the *kalos kagathos*: this is evident for Aesop, who at the beginning of the *Life* is a slave of the lowest kind, described as

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in the *Life of Aesop* (*G*, 105–116). Alexander's *gnomê* about the four cups of pleasure, joy, satiety, and disgust seems to be an adaptation of a sentence uttered by Aesop about the three cups of pleasure, drunkenness, and violence (*Life of Aesop G*, 68).

4 Editions: Kroll (1926); Papathomopoulos (1990). Translation of the *Life of Aesop* by Wills (1997) 180–215. For the *Alexander Romance*, I have used K. Dowden's translation of the β recension, adapting it when the *A* text differs from β: see Reardon (1989) 650–735.

5 Konstan (1998); Thomas (1998).

"truly horrible to behold" (1), and even as "a specimen of human garbage" (14).[6] As for Alexander, things are a bit more complicated: he was certainly born a prince, but a bastard prince, the result of Olympias' adulterous affair with the magician Nectanebo. And his physical appearance is far from being in accordance with the norm of ideal beauty, for he is short (2.15.1; 3.4.3), with eyes of different colours and with strange teeth "as sharp as a serpent's" (1.13.3).

1.3. *Unconventional plots*

A main difference between our texts and the conventional Greek novels is, of course, the near absence of any love element in the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance*[7]—although both texts seem to show an awareness of what is the norm in the "big five". Alexander's marriage with Roxane in the *Alexander Romance* has certainly nothing to do with a love story; it is a purely dynastic match that serves to establish Alexander as Darius' legitimate successor. Alexander, when writing to his fiancée, finds nothing sweeter to tell her than to have feelings worthy of him and to show respect for his mother Olympias (2.22.14–16)! Nevertheless, even if Roxane plays only a minimal part in the *Alexander Romance*, it must be noted that the narrator has transformed Alexander into a monogamous hero: every hint of adulterous episodes has been removed from Alexander's novelistic biography. In the *Romance* there is no question of an affair between Alexander and the queen of the Amazons, as there was in the historical tradition; a mere exchange of diplomatic letters has replaced the well-known love story (3.25–26). The *Life of Aesop* too includes an allusion to the idealistic novel—but an allusion of a very different and more ironic kind: for the only erotic episode of the work, the affair of Xanthos' wife with Aesop (75–76), begins with a parodic scene of love-at-first-sight, where a masturbating slave replaces the "jeune premier", and lust serves as a substitute for romantic love.

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[6] See also *Life of Aesop* 21: Aesop is "a heap of disharmonious parts"; 87: he is compared to "a frog, or a hedgehog, a misshapen jar, the captain of the monkeys, a flask, a cook's pot, or a dog in a wicker-basket".

[7] See Hägg and Karla in this volume.

2. *Fictional biographies*

Telling the story of an individual existence, the *Life of Aesop* and the *Alexander Romance* may be classified under the heading of biography: in both works, it is the career and death of a single man that form the narrative backbone. Whereas the *Life of Aesop* begins not with an account of Aesop's birth, but with a crucial point in his adult life, his miraculous recovery of the power of speech (4–8) (which may be seen as a kind of rebirth), the *Alexander Romance* even narrates the story of his hero's conception! In the Greek, Latin and Armenian manuscripts of the *alpha* recension, the biographical element is put to the fore in the very title, which in the Greek manuscript (A) reads as Βίος Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνος.[8] In the *Life of Aesop*, called Βίβλος Ξάνθου φιλοσόφου καὶ Αἰσώπου δούλου αὐτοῦ, περὶ τῆς ἀναστροφῆς Αἰσώπου in the *Grottaferrata* manuscript, the biographical trend is stressed not at the beginning, but at the end of the narrative, summarized as Αἰσώπου γέννα, ἀνατροφή, προκοπή, καὶ ἀποβίωσις.

What differentiates our novelistic biographies from historical ones (for instance, Plutarch's *Lives*) is of course the place given to the fictional element (the *plasma*), which turns them into διηγήματα πλασματικά or "pseudo-history".[9] But there is another important feature that makes a difference, namely the intention to entertain in Aesop's and Alexander's novelistic lives: historical biographies, relying on the moralizing effect of *exemplum*, aim primarily at the reader's edification.

2.1. *Temporality*

A brief study of temporality in Aesop's and Alexander's lives clearly shows how fictional considerations prevailed over the historical. In both texts, chronological references are usually imprecise, and expressions such as "some time later" or "a few days later" are regularly used

[8] Julius Valerius' translation is called *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*; in Armenian the work is entitled *A History of the Great World Conqueror, Alexander of Macedon. A Life of Bravery and Heroic Deeds and, too, a Death Marked with Marvels*. English translation by Wolohojian (1969).

[9] However we must keep in mind that historical lives in antiquity were much less factual than they claimed to be. As noticed by Fusillo (1991) 56, historical writing in the ancient world was a matter of rhetoric, so that the boundaries between history and narrative fiction were quite imprecise. Briant (2003) shows much scepticism concerning the historical value of the so-called "historians of Alexander".

to connect one episode to another.[10] The frequent anachronisms confirm the low value attached by the authors to chronological accuracy: it is not a problem in these texts to present Alexander as a student of Pindar, and Aesop as an admirer of Euripides![11] To be sure, the succession of episodes follows the chronological scheme of biography, but both authors introduce into this chronological framework what Laurence Harf-Lancner calls "the guideline of significance", by means of signs, prophetic dreams or divine utterances, used to transform the lives of Alexander or Aesop into meaningful destinies.[12] Alexander, as a response to the Gymnosophists' criticisms, even pictures himself as an instrument of divine Providence: "Man displays no activity, but for Providence above. I too would like to stop conducting wars; only the master of my mind does not allow me" (3.6.8–9). In the *Alexander Romance*, the narrative linearity is interrupted by more than fifteen signs that are employed to prefigure the main events of the hero's life, his successes, and his premature death;[13] in the *Life of Aesop*, premonitory passages are not as ubiquitous as they are in the *Alexander Romance*, but there are certain episodes that may be considered as preteritions. Aesop's hybristic attitude at the end of the novel seems to be anticipated at its beginning, when the overseer Zenas accuses him of saying everything ὑπὲρ ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν (10). Likewise, the fable about true and false dreams, while representing Apollo's castigation for his *alazoneia*, perhaps foreshadows Aesop's final punishment for the same fault (33), and Apollo's wrath against the fabulist is forecast long before the event.[14] On the other hand, Aesop himself repeatedly warns the Delphians that they will have to pay for his murder[15]—and the final chapter of the *Life* allows us to witness the realization of his prophetic pronouncements.

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[10] *Alexander Romance* 1.2.1: μετὰ ἱκανὸν χρόνον; 1.24.2: καὶ δὴ χρόνου ἐμπεσόντος; 3.2.1: μεθ' ἡμέρας; *Life of Aesop* 101: Πολλοὺς δὲ χρόνους ἐν τῇ Σάμῳ διατρίψας; 105: μετὰ δὲ χρόνον. However, as Karla rightly observes in this volume, time references are less unrealistic in the *Alexander Romance* than in the *Life of Aesop*.

[11] *Alexander Romance* 1.46a.10; *Life of Aesop* 32.

[12] Harf-Lancner (1996).

[13] See the list of signs supplied in Muckensturm-Poulle (2002).

[14] See *Life of Aesop* 100 and 127: Apollo gives his support to the Delphians' deceit, because he is angry at Aesop for having slighted him on Samos "by not including him with the statues of the nine Muses".

[15] See *Life of Aesop* 133 (fable of the mouse and the frog): "So also, men of Delphi, although I die, I shall be the death of you as well"; 134–139 (fable of the rabbit, the eagle, and the dung-beetle): "In the same way, men of Delphi, you should not despise

2.2. *Seriality as a way of making sense*

The proliferation of episodes in Aesop's and Alexander's fictional biographies obeys the principle of seriality: more or less similar narrative structures tend to recur again and again, and the very phenomenon of reduplication gives the whole work a kind of unity—not the stylistic unity of the well-constructed ideal Greek novels, but a thematic coherence that allows us to read these texts as novels of a sort. Several instances of narrative reiteration are to be found in the *Alexander Romance*: Poros' letters to Alexander are little more than a duplication of Darius' letters, as Alexander himself makes clear, when, in order to reassure his troops, he ridicules Poros' boastfulness: "Remember what Darius wrote too. It is a fact that the only state of mind barbarians have is obtuseness" (3.22.6). Alexander's visit to Candace duplicates his former visit to Darius—his use of a disguise being itself a duplication of Nectanebo's disguise in the opening chapters of the *Romance*, while the secret pact concluded by the hero and the Ethiopian queen reminds us of Olympias' complicity with her son, when he was still a boy. As for the *Life of Aesop*, previously considered as a hotchpotch of heterogeneous episodes, its coherence has been convincingly brought to the fore by Niklas Holzberg, who was able to show the subtle game of repetitions and oppositions structuring Aesop's fictional biography, its author's skilful use of fables to highlight the main thematics of the work and the masterly reversal at the end of the novel, when Aesop, the former slave, loses his powers of persuasion at the very moment he has reached the peak of his life.[16]

2.3. *Narrative suspense and emotional involvement*

By way of signs, preteritions and gradations, the authors of our fictional lives are able to create a sense of narrative suspense, whose aim is to intensify the reader's emotional involvement. It is striking how many times Alexander is threatened by death throughout the *Romance,* and not only during battle scenes. From the very beginning, he has to face deadly menaces: Philip, who first intended to expose his newborn son (1.13.1), later tries to kill him at his wedding-feast (1.21.3);

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this temple where I have taken refuge, even though it is a small shrine, but remember the dung-beetle, and revere Zeus, god of strangers and Olympus".

[16] Holzberg (1992) 33–75.

Nikolaos, his main adversary at the Olympic games, contemplates his death (1.19.4); Alexander is nearly swept away by the river Stranga, when pursued by Darius' men after his first secret embassy (2.15), while during his second embassy to Candace he must face the deadly hatred of Candace's youngest son (3.22–23). In the long episode of Alexander's agony, suspense is added by means of the detail of the feather with which he tries to vomit the poison administered by Antipater's son ... and so makes his death all the more certain, for the feather too has been poisoned (3.32). Alexander's fictional biography thus appears as a race with death, the narrator of the *Romance* exploiting every possibility to make us fear for his hero's life.

In the *Life of Aesop*, expectation is of a somewhat different kind. In the first half of the biography, Aesop is threatened most of the time not with death, but punishment. He is repeatedly in danger of being whipped (and sometimes actually beaten),[17] and we are made to share his yearning for liberation—a yearning expressed again and again throughout the narrative.[18] It is only after he has become a free man that his life actually happens to be repeatedly endangered: He first risks being killed as an opponent of king Croesus (95–99); the Babylonian king Lykourgos then condemns him to be executed as a traitor (104), and he spends a long time in a jail after which he comes out, "his hair long and shaggy, his skin pale from a long imprisonment" (107); lastly he is arrested (127–128) and condemned by the Delphians to be thrown off a cliff (132), and proves unable to escape death (134–142).

Another way of increasing the readers' emotional involvement consists in putting emphasis upon the hero's feelings, so that he appears all the more sympathetic. In the *Alexander Romance*, the narrator, who is quite prone to pathos, uses this method in some dramatic episodes, to arouse the reader's sympathy—for instance, in the story of the oracular trees, where we can see Alexander "thunderstruck", "amazed", and "upset" by the prophetic sayings of the trees, which thrice announce to

[17] See *Life of Aesop* 2: Aesop's comrades think that he is "good for nothing but a beating"; 3: Aesop begs his master "to hold off punishment"; 11: the overseer Zenas is allowed to "beat Aesop to death"; 42: Xanthos is "searching for some pretext to have Aesop whipped"; 50: Xanthos wishes to find some excuse to "beat Aesop and punish him soundly"; 56: Xanthos is "looking for an excuse to give Aesop a beating"; he menaces him to "get a beating and be placed in the stocks"; 58: "Aesop was strung up and beaten"; then Xanthos menaces to "shackle" him and "break" him "in two"; 77: "Aesop was whipped soundly"; 80: Xanthos "commanded that Aesop be bound and locked up"; 83: Aesop enters "in chains".

[18] See *Life of Aesop* 27; 74; 78–80; 88–89.

him that he will soon have to die (3.17.35 et 3.17.37–38). On the contrary, the author of the *Life of Aesop* is evidently reluctant to transform his hero-fabulist into a pathetic figure. Aesop may be weeping when imprisoned by the Delphians, but the nasty fables he tells the friend who comes to visit him immediately undermine any pathetic effect (128–129). In this biography with its philosophical overtones emotions are not valued. It is the mock-philosopher Xanthos whom the author ironically depicts as a highly emotive person, whereas Aesop has perfect self-control, able to keep "unperturbed", even when subjected to the worst jeers.[19]

2.4. *Ego narratives*

It is important to keep in mind that Alexander in the *Romance* is pictured as an individual, and not as a statesman—except in some passages such as the decree to the Persian people (2.21) or the Last Will, which are in fact heterogeneous documents inserted and imperfectly blended into the main narrative. To use David Konstan's own words, the *Alexander Romance* is not a story of warfare, but rather an "ego fantasy".[20] The author shows but little interest in the political aspect of Alexander's story, as becomes evident in the chapters where he relates the young king's departure for his military campaign. Hardly anything is told about Alexander's motivations,[21] and we do not even know why he chooses to go from Macedonia to Thrace, then from Thrace to Sicily (1.26), and from Sicily to Africa (1.30). We have to wait for the Athenian debate, in book 2.5.11, to hear something of an explanation, when Alexander himself declares that he fights the Barbarians in the name of Greek freedom. To be sure, Alexander's chief motivations in the *Romance* are alien to politics, as can be seen in the episode of Ammon's oracle, where Alexander's questions to the god are of a purely personal kind (1.30.3 and 1.30.5). He wants to be informed of his father's identity, and he expresses his desire for *kleos*—a desire that would be more appropriate for an epic character than for a real statesman. Again, two chapters later, when Alexander questions

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[19] In chapter 21, Aesop is "not perturbed" (μὴ πτυρόμενος), when people jeer at him; in chapter 87, he is "imperturbable", when hearing the Samians laugh at him (ἀκούων ἀμυκτηρίστως).

[20] Konstan (1998) 137.

[21] To his troops Alexander is content to say: "Come to myself, and trust me: let's campaign against Barbarians" (1.25.1).

the god Sarapis, the only thing he appears to be interested in is to know the time of his death (1.33.10). Once more, in this episode, the psychological and spiritual quest prevails.

Thus, both the *Alexander Romance* and the *Life of Aesop* are focused upon their protagonists' individuality. To be sure, at first sight things might seem not very different in historical biographies such as Plutarch's *Lives*, for Plutarch's principal aim, as explained in the prologue to Alexander's biography, is to show the hero's ἦθος by means of sayings and small facts that will reveal τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς σημεῖα even more clearly than reports of battles and other brilliant actions (1.2–3). But do the various images of Aesop and Alexander that we can gather from their fictional biographies really help us to approach the ἦθος of such characters? If we assemble what both authors say about their protagonists, what they have other fictitious characters say, and then add the scarce elements of self-definition found in the discourses of the heroes themselves,[22] the final result is quite sketchy. The correspondence between Alexander and Darius undeniably plays the main part in the chapters devoted to the Greco-Persian war, but it reveals few traits of Alexander's personality, whose values appear to vary according to circumstances, as noted by David Konstan. What comes to the fore, again and again, is Alexander's cleverness and verbal dexterity;[23] and the same is true for Aesop. Among some twenty authorial statements that provide elements of a portrait of the fabulist by the author himself, only two deal with aspects other than Aesop's ugliness[24] or his intellectual capacities.[25] He is once described as a "great benefactor of humanity" (1), and once praised for piety, a quality that is far from confirmed by the ensuing narrative (4).

[22] In the *Alexander Romance* I think of the many speeches in the Athenian episode (2.2–5) or of the extensive exchange of letters that provide us with variegated images of Alexander—whose equivalent is to be found in the *Life of Aesop* in the discourses of the Samian assembly (87–89).

[23] Konstan (1998) 132: There is little effort to maintain consistency of characterization; the personality of the protagonist is constituted by his wit rather than by ethical traits.

[24] See *Life of Aesop* 14 (ἀπόμαγμα); 21 (ὅλος ἁμαρτημάτων χύσις); 23 (σαπρόν); 24 (στυγνὸν καὶ σκυθρωπόν, τέρας); 31 (τὸ κακοπινὲς τοῦ προσώπου); 75 (ἀμορφία).

[25] See *Life of Aesop* 3 (πολυπειρία); 25 (εὐστόχῳ λόγῳ); 27 (τὸ ἕτοιμον τῶν λόγων); 34 (τὸ φρόνιμον αὐτοῦ … εὑρεσίλογος); 88a (ἑτοιμολογία); 93 (ἀληθινὸν μάντιν); 101 (φιλοσοφίαν … τὸ νοῦν ἔχειν); 103 (σοφία); 114 (τὸ νοερόν); 116 (εὐστοχίαν … τὸ εὔθετον τῆς γλώττης); 118 (νοῦν); 122 (πανοῦργος); 123 (σοφία); 124 (σοφίαν καὶ παιδείαν).

3. *Trickster stories*

A word often recurs in studies devoted to the *Alexander Romance* and to the *Life of Aesop* in order to describe the protagonists of both works, to define their common, atypical personality, and to contrast them with the heroes of the idealistic Greek novels: they are called "tricksters".[26] As the term is sometimes used in a rather loose way, it will be useful to recall the original meaning of a notion imported from the field of psycho-anthropology and to see what the use of such a designation implies as far as the construction of Alexander's and Aesop's characters is concerned, and how their "trickster" quality may affect the reader's perception of each, and perhaps create a special, closer link between reader and character—a point with which novelistic literature appears to be especially concerned.

3.1. *The trickster type*

The word "trickster" is traditionally used to define a very special kind of mythological type, some specimens of which have been well studied by anthropologists and psychologists. P. Radin, C. Kerenyi, and C.G. Jung have published a collection of essays about Wakdjunkaga, the hero of the Indian tribe of the Winnebagos, and Georges Dumézil has devoted a joint analysis to Loki, a minor Scandinavian divinity, and Syrdon, a Narte hero of Ossete mythology.[27] In the aforementioned essay, Kerenyi quotes various mythological characters of ancient Greece as more or less close representatives of the trickster type: the thieves' god Hermes, Heracles robbing the Delphian tripod, or Prometheus stealing Zeus' fire for the benefit of mankind.[28] Renart, in the French *Roman de Renart*, is another, Medieval example of the same mythological type.[29]

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[26] See for instance Koulakiotis (2006) 210–211; Konstantakos (2006).

[27] Radin (1972): 171–191 "The Trickster in relation to Greek Mythology" by Kerenyi; 193–211 "On the Psychology of the Trickster Figure" by Jung; Dumézil (1948).

[28] On Hermes as a nocturnal, ambiguous god, patron of thieves, liars and other marginal beings, see Kahn (1978): The story of Hermes' confrontation with Apollo is that of a confrontation between an older and a younger brother, a tall and a small one; Hermes the bastard wins thanks to his *mêtis*: Kahn calls him "vif, polymorphe, brouilleur et renverseur, ⟨...⟩ rapide, mobile, fugace, ⟨...⟩ furtif, rusé, déconcertant" (182).

[29] Bellon (1986); Lomazzi (1980).

Wakdjunkaga, Loki, or Syrdon, are, to be sure, very disconcerting figures, combining human and animal features: they appear as unstable beings, prone to metamorphosis and even changes of sex, and they all embody extreme mobility. They share a similar kind of marginality: Wakdjunkaga is sometimes credited with a deformed father—hence his strange, laughable appearance; small Loki is treated as an inferior by the other gods of the Scandinavian pantheon: he plays the role of a messenger, an attendant, or a buffoon; Syrdon is a bastard, with a diabolical ancestry, and the Narte heroes are inclined to consider him as a mere servant. Wakdjunkaga, Loki, and Syrdon all possess an evil, obscure side; as amoral and fundamentally asocial beings, they enjoy playing tricks on other (more traditional) gods or heroes, and often play the part of troublemakers.

3.2. *Aesop and Alexander as tricksters*

Many of the features I have just described apply to Aesop and Alexander. Both are marginal personalities, Aesop by the very fact that he was born a slave, and a monstrously ugly one, whose mere sight arouses universal repulsion. As for Alexander, it may, at first, seem paradoxical to place a king's son, destined to become master of the world, in the same category as Aesop, the "human garbage", but the clue lies in the account of Alexander's conception: his irregular birth makes him a trickster too, and that is, certainly, why the author of the *Romance* has devoted so much space to the story of Nectanebo. The motif of "animality" is present in both lives: Aesop is repeatedly likened to various kinds of animal (dog, frog, monkey, etc.), while there are deviant features in Alexander's portrait as well, as he is supposed to have the mane of a lion and teeth as sharp as a serpent's! Moreover, he shares Loki's small stature, and his extraordinary mobility is typical of the trickster.[30] In Aesop and Alexander alike, there is an obscure, terrible side. Alexander's maleficent power is well illustrated by the series of murders he commits when still a child,[31] while Aesop's speech has the formidable effect of being the cause of his adoptive son's death!

[30] Aesop does not travel all around the world as Alexander, but he nevertheless goes to Babylon, Egypt and continental Greece.

[31] See *Alexander Romance* 1.14 (murder of Nectanebo); 1.19 (murder of Nicolaos); 1.21 (murder of Lysias).

There exists, then, a striking contrast between the trickster's mean appearance and his real capacities. This contrast is stressed on several occasions in the *Alexander Romance*; for example, when Nikolaos spits in Alexander's face, "with contempt for his youth, not having discovered the capacity of his soul" (1.18.9) or, again, at Darius' dinner when the Persians "look with amazement at Alexander's small stature, not realizing that in a small vessel was contained the glory of heavenly Fortune" (2.15.1), and, once more, in the episode of Alexander's duel with king Poros, when Poros foolishly scorns his enemy, "seeing Alexander's body was no match for his own body" (3.4.3). In the *Life of Aesop*, the same motif of a discrepancy between appearance and reality features both in the authorial narrative and in Aesop's fables and speeches.[32] It even forms the central theme of a biography whose hero, as Isis emphasizes, "may be ill-proportioned on the outside, but is above all reproach in regard to his inner spirit" (7). Aesop's story, as well as Alexander's, is meant to prove that smallness can get the better of tallness/greatness. For the fabulist, even when he is still a slave, constantly humiliates his own master Xanthos, just as Alexander, the boy-king, defeats the mighty kings Darius and Poros, who had boasted of their invincibility.

The main weapon of the two heroes is their cunning, that special kind of tricky intelligence that ancient Greeks called μῆτις. E. Koulakiotis, in a recent book about the Alexander myth, has stressed the special connection established in the *Romance* between the protagonist and Hermes, the tricksters' god.[33] Alexander, as well as Aesop, is fond of playing tricks, and even the conduct of war becomes a kind of game for the Macedonian boy-king, as he says to his own troops: "Engaging battle is mere play for us".[34] So it is no surprise to find both heroes sharing an affinity with the Athenian hero Melanthos, the "Black" fighter, who defeated the Boeotian king Xanthos, "the Blond", thanks to a "look behind you" trick.[35] It is by using the same kind of stratagem

[32] See for instance *Life of Aesop* 26 (to Xanthos): "Do not look at outward appearances, but examine the soul ... . When we go into a wine shop to buy wine, the wine jars appear ugly, but the wine tastes good"; 88 (to the Samians): "You should consider my intelligence, not my appearance. It is absurd to condemn someone's mind based on appearances alone".

[33] Koulakiotis (2006) 227–232.

[34] *Alexander Romance* 2.9.7: ἡ γὰρ συμβολὴ τοῦ πολέμου παίγνιον ἡμῖν ἐστι.

[35] On this mythical *agôn* supposed to explain the origin of the Athenian festival Apaturia, see Vidal-Naquet (1983) 156–161: after his victory over the Boeotian king, Melanthos succeeds the old Athenian king Thymoites; his son Kodros will be the last

that Alexander is able to defeat the gigantic king Poros (3.4.4), whereas the whole Samian section in the *Life of Aesop* is devoted to the war of tricks played by Aesop the Black slave on his Blond master Xanthos.

3.3. *Two different kinds of tricksters?*

There are, nevertheless, some significant differences between our two tricksters. The way both use their power of speech, for instance, is quite distinct, although they are both prone to play with the double meaning of words:[36] Alexander often tells lies in the *Romance*, whereas Aesop, embodying παρρησία, is rarely caught lying in the true sense of the word, except in the Egyptian episode (117–118 and 122), where he uses lies with the sole aim of countering the lies of Nectanebo himself, that is to say as a kind of reprimand. Unlike Alexander, he never lies just for fun.

In the *Alexander Romance*, lies are often connected with disguise—another element that is almost entirely lacking in the *Life of Aesop*. Alexander, as is well known, likes to assume other people's personalities: he plays the part of a messenger to pay Darius an incognito visit (2.14–15), and pretends to be his own lieutenant Ptolemy in a long series of chapters involving queen Candace and the queen's son Candaules. The author of the *Alexander Romance* is evidently delighted with the resulting confusion of such changes of personality, and "as though" formulas proliferate in his narrative.[37] There is nothing comparable in the *Life of Aesop*, unless we take into account the "mises en scene" Aesop suggests to Xanthos, so that he wins the challenge of drinking the sea dry (71) or avoids the shame of proving unable to solve a

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king of Athens. The various *testimonia* derive the name of Apaturia from the ἀπάτη (the "trick") thanks to which Melanthos was able to defeat Xanthos.

[36] In the *Alexander Romance*, see for instance Alexander's ambivalent promise to Darius' murderers (2.21.23–26); in the *Life of Aesop*, see Aesop's subtle use of erotic insinuations in ch. 76, or the way he manipulates the codified language of the inscription related to the hidden treasure in ch. 79–80.

[37] *Alexander Romance* 2.14.8 (Alexander says): "Alexander is here and speaks to you through myself" (παρὼν Ἀλέξανδρος ἐνθάδε ταῦτα λέγει δι᾽ ἐμοῦ); 2.14.9 (Darius says): "Isn't it that you are Alexander? You speak with enough audacity to be not a messenger, but Alexander himself" (Μή τι σὺ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος; οὕτω γάρ μοι μετὰ θράσους διαλέγῃ, οὐχ ὡς ἄγγελος, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνος); 3.19.7: Ptolemy is invited to sit on the throne and to receive Candaules "as though" he were Alexander (ὡς σὺ τυγχάνων Ἀλέξανδρος); 3.20.9 (Candaules declares): "I take this man as though he were Alexander himself" (ὡς αὐτὸν Ἀλέξανδρον).

portent for the Samian people (85). However, Aesop practises what might be called a kind of disguise, when, in telling his fables, he uses masks to speak of himself and, successively, plays his part in the guise of a dog (97), a cicada (99), a ploughman (129), a simple-minded girl (131), a mouse (133), a rabbit (135–139), a farmer (140), and a violated girl (141). But this metaphorical game is not as playful as Alexander's real disguises. Such a difference between the tricky slave and the tricky conqueror is probably due to the fact that both works pursue somewhat different aims. In the *Life of Aesop*, even if it may be called a comical biography, there is an undoubtedly serious core, to be connected with the philosophical quality of the narrative. Even if Aesop is a rebellious figure and a transgressor of social norms, his story is never free of a form of didacticism.[38] In the *Alexander Romance*, the pleasure of fiction prevails. Alexander's liking for lies and disguise mirrors the author's predilection for fabulation, as suggested by the authorial statement inserted in chapter 2.15, when Alexander, after stealing Darius' cups, falsely pretends it to be a custom among Macedonian kings to offer as a gift the vessel used at dinner—a lie the author praises in the following words: "Every story, if it carries conviction, always has its audience enthralled".[39] I think the difference between the two works is further confirmed by their posterity, inasmuch as *Alexander*'s rewritings prove to be much more inventive than *Aesop*'s: the *W* recension and Planudes' text are indeed little more than abbreviated and moralized versions.

A few words, to conclude, about the psychological interest of the trickster theme. I believe that this very theme plays a crucial part in the identification process, which is so important in the definition of a novel (in a text's "novel-ness", to use a word coined by N. Holzberg).[40] The reader is clearly happy to identify himself with cunning characters able to oppose successfully figures embodying power and authority; he imagines himself in the role of small Alexander standing up to boastful giants, or of poor Aesop deriding a philosopher excessively proud of his high culture, and the pleasure may be all the greater if, according

[38] In this volume, see Karla's remark about the fables, which "betray the didactic character of the work".

[39] *Alexander Romance* 2.15.5: πλαστὸς ἀεὶ μῦθος, ἐὰν σχῇ πίστιν, ἐκστῆναι πεποίηκε τοὺς ἀκούοντας (also quoted by Karla in this volume). According to Muckensturm-Poulle (2002) 164, Nectanebo in the *Romance* may be seen as a figure of the novelist: he does not hesitate to manipulate other characters' destiny according to his own prospects.

[40] Holzberg (1996) 15. In the *Alexander Romance* the identification process is also facilitated by Alexander's Freudian "family romance": see Jouanno (2002) 220–223.

to Jung's interpretation, the "raison d'être" of the trickster myth is to keep conscious that primitive part of personality which psychologists call "shadow"—a "shadow" that Aesop's and Alexander's novelistic biographies allow us to rediscover.[41]

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[41] Putting the emphasis on the "polaristic structure of the psyche", Jung defines the "shadow" as a "sort of second personality, of a puerile and inferior character"; the trickster is "a collective shadow figure, an epitome of all the inferior traits of characters in individuals"; the myth of the trickster, inducing a "therapeutic anamnesis", "holds the earlier low intellectual and moral level before the eyes of the more highly developed individual": see Radin (1972) 202–209.

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CHAPTER FOUR

ROMANCE WITHOUT *EROS*[1]

John-Theophanes A. Papademetriou

When readers maybe familiar with the "canonical" or "ideal" ancient romances first encounter the text of the *Aesop Romance* (also known as *Life of Aesop*) or read a study that uses this conventional title of the work, they are often surprised and even annoyed by the term "romance", because it evokes for them an exclusively "romantic" love relation that they do not see in the narrative. Such readers will be even more surprised to discover that for some students of the *Aesop Romance* erotic love indeed plays a significant role in this text, "despite Aesop's monstrous ugliness", because Aesop himself is therein portrayed as "the favorite of Aphrodite" and "a gift" of the goddess.[2] The evidence adduced in support of this view consists of (a) the sexual episode between Aesop and the anonymous wife of his master, Xanthos, a putatively renowned philosopher (Chapters 75–76), (b) a misunderstanding of a passage in the text referring to Xanthos' wife (supposedly, she "had seen in a dream that Aphrodite was sending her a perfectly beautiful slave" as

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations of the text of the *Aesop Romance* are from Perry (1952) while all translations of Greek passages are from Daly (1961). References to Perry's text involve three or four numbers (if the text stretches beyond one line), which record, in order, the Chapter, the page, and the line(s) of the page. Perry edited two versions of the text, the *Perriana* or *Vita G*, which is the oldest recension of the text, and the *Westermanniana* or *Vita W*, which results from a conflation of two other versions; see Perry (1966). On the names of the two versions edited by Perry, see Papademetriou (1989) 27 or (1980) 25. A widely disseminated adaptation of the *Westermanniana* was composed by the prolific Byzantine scholar Maximos Planudes (1255–1305) and is named after him *Planudea*. There are also two other editions of the *Perriana*; one is cited in our next note, and the other is by Ferrari (1997).

[2] Papathomopoulos (1990) 25–26, and to some extent Adrados (1979a) 95–96; see also below, note 42. Papathomopoulos' 1991 reprinted edition differs from the earlier one only in one respect, in that the almost exclusively orthographic "Errata" ("Παρο-ράματα") listed on p. 183 of the 1990 edition were incorporated in the main part of the book; no other corrections or revisions were made. We refer to Papathomopoulos' 1990 edition henceforth by the editor's name alone.

a gift [*Perriana* or *Vita G* 29.45.25–28]),[3] (c) the recounting of two ribald stories.[4]

In examining the role of love in the *Aesop Romance*, for the sake of completeness we need also to take into account a partially preserved roguish story in Chapter 141 (Fable 379 Perry) as well as the erotic entanglement of Aesop's adopted son, Linos or Ainos (hereafter Ainos), with a royal concubine (Chapter 103). We aim to show that the emotion called "love" plays no significant role either in our text or in a Byzantine/post-Byzantine metrical adaptation of the motif of the risqué story in Chapter 129 (Widow and the Plowman), apparently unknown to Classicists, which is discussed in the Appendix (see, however, below, note 94). Furthermore, in the process of examining the stories, special attention will be paid to the dissemination both of the stories and of some motifs, proverbial expressions and metaphors used therein, while on occasion we shall broaden our scope to deal with some textual and interpretive problems occurring in these parts of the text. Last, but certainly not least, our analysis focuses at greater length on Chapters 75–76, which record the brief and crude, sexual affair between Aesop and Xanthos' wife. This affair, far from being an instance of genuine love, is to be read, on the contrary, as an entertaining *parody* of the kind of ideal love portrayed in the ancient romances. If this reading is accepted, then we also gain a useful insight into the chronological relation between the *Aesop Romance* and the ancient canonical novels or romances.

The only display in our text of *eros*, in the sense of an erotic feeling that is genuine and credible, is Xanthos' love for his wife, even though it might be called asymmetric, to use such a trendy and loaded word. The clearest expression of Xanthos' amorous feelings is found in Chapters 29–32,[5] where we read about his arrival at his household with Aesop

[3] See Papathomopoulos (1990) 26: εἶχε δεῖ στὸ ὄνειρό της ὅτι ἡ Ἀφροδίτη τῆς ἔστελνε δῶρο ἕναν πάγκαλο δοῦλο (also p. 68 of his translation of the text, where the same mistake recurs); and *ibid*., p. 25, ὁ Αἴσωπος παρουσιάζεται ἀπὸ μιὰ ἄποψη ὡς *ὁ εὐνοούμενος τῆς Ἀφροδίτης* ("Aesop is presented 'from one viewpoint [or: aspect]' as *the favorite of Aphrodite*").

[4] See Papathomopoulos (1996) 26, who mentions specifically the story about the Widow and the Plowman (Chapter 129) and implicitly the one about the Foolish Virgin (Chapter 131); see also Adrados (1979a) 95–96 ("gift from Aphrodite", p. 95).

[5] Xanthos' loving care for his wife can be indirectly traced in the text in a few other passages: in Chapter 42.50.8–9 of the *Perriana*, we read that a piglet was being

in tow. The philosopher simply informs his wife that he has bought a male slave, as she had asked him to do. However, the ensuing dialog, instead of recording some kind of positive response on the wife's part, conveys instead the woman's disillusionment and bitterness. The cause for this turn of events was Aesop's physical appearance, which she finds abhorrent and even insulting. Evidently, she had nurtured different expectations. It is this part of the episode which forms the basis for the aforementioned claim that Aesop was a gift of Aphrodite etc. (above, p. 49, section [b]), and in order to discuss it we need first to summarize the incident and comment on it in some detail.

Xanthos' wife had hoped to get a good-looking male slave (*Perriana* 22.42.21–23) and her wishful thinking led her to assume that her husband had indeed bought her such a one (*Perriana* 29.45.25–28).[6] She immediately offers thanks to Aphrodite (not to Apollo, the god of prophecy, or to Zeus), enabling us to understand the focus of her interests and thus somehow preparing us, with unintentional irony, for what is to transpire between her and Aesop later, in Chapters 75–76. She wishfully takes her husband's purchase to be the fulfillment of a dream sent to her by the goddess of love.[7] In the relevant passage, according to Papathomopoulos' edition (1990), Xanthos' wife tells him: … κοιμηθεῖσα γὰρ εὐθὺς ὄνειρον εἶδον ἐν ᾧ πάγκαλον σωμάτιον *ὠνησάμενος ἐχαρίσω μοι*. It is clear in the text (which here is basically the same as Ferrari's and also Perry's at *Perriana* 29.45.27–28) and explicitly stated that the gift (i.e. the slave) was *not* from the goddess (who had only sent her a "prophetic" dream, as stated unambiguously before this point in the narrative) but from *a man*, the woman's husband (the ὠνησάμεν*ος* above is, of course, a *masculine* participle). Thus, the correct sense of the text is (in Daly's translation, slightly adapted): "When I fell asleep,

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fattened for the celebration of his wife's birthday (in the other version we are not told the specific purpose for which the piglet was raised); also, in Chapter 44, Xanthos orders Aesop to carry to his wife "portions" of food from a dinner party to which he had been invited.

[6] This is what Xanthos had promised to do at her request; see *Perriana* 22.42.22–23; in the *Westermanniana* or *Vita W* the relevant dialog is missing, while the Chapter is condensed into just one line and a half (as compared to almost seven lines in the *Perriana*).

[7] This is the reason for which she thanks Aphrodite, namely, *the* (falsely) "prophetic" *dream* in which she saw her husband (*not* the goddess) presenting her with "a perfectly beautiful slave".

I had a dream in which *you* [sc. Xanthos, my husband] bought a perfectly beautiful slave[8] and gave him to me for a gift".[9]

This farcical scene does not make Aesop truly "a gift from Aphrodite" or "a favorite of Aphrodite" in any respect, but the text as phrased above does reveal the woman's wishful fantasy concerning the new slave's looks. Soon, however, she realizes her error and recants. At the end of the entire episode (not just at the end of her altercation with Xanthos) and after a kind of truce has been established between her and Aesop, she declares unequivocally (*Perriana* 33.47.17–18): "I was *misled by a dream*, for I thought I was going to have a good-looking slave bought for me, but you're deformed" (ἐγὼ *ἐπλανήθην τῷ ὀνείρῳ·* καλὸν γὰρ ὑπελάμβανον ἠγοράσθαι μοι δοῦλον, σὺ δὲ σαπρὸς[10] εἶ [Chapter 33 is missing in the *Westermanniana*]).

Turning back to the narrative, we see that Xanthos humorously, but nevertheless to his own detriment, plays along with his wife's fantasy that she was getting a "perfectly beautiful slave" and launches playfully but mockingly into high-flown praise of Aesop's beauty or, in his very words, into an *ἐγκώμιον γελοίον* (*Westermanniana* 29.86.18) and exalts the slave's beauty to the level of the gods (*Perriana* 29.45.28–29). When his wife finally sees with her own eyes Aesop's repulsive form and extreme ugliness, the descent into reality is shattering. She is so disillusioned and at the same time infuriated, that she considers Xanthos' action a shrewd, malicious scheme, aimed at getting rid of her. As she tells him (my translation), "you wanted to take another wife and … brought me this one [sc. Aesop] on purpose, in order to make me leave" (ἑτέραν λαβεῖν βουλόμενος γυναῖκα … ἤνεγκάς μοι τοῦτον ἐπίτηδες … ἵνα … φύγω. *Perriana* 31.46.17–20). She then proceeds to declare that she is leaving him and their home and demands the return of her dowry (Chapter 31, in both versions). Xanthos is crushed and turns to his slave for help. Aesop, however, urges him to "let her go

[8] This is what is actually said in the text, without any mention of Aesop, not that "Xanthus' wife had … seen Aesop in dreams offered to her by Aphrodite" as stated in Adrados (1999) 680. Daly is not the only scholar to have understood the passage correctly; he has several followers; see, e.g., Kurke (2003) 83.

[9] The corresponding Chapter of the *Westermanniana* is abridged (above, note 6); this part of the episode is missing, and no mention is made of thanks paid to Aphrodite.

[10] This key word, used frequently in the *Aesop Romance* to describe Aesop, does not mean "worthless", as translated by Daly (1961) and Wills (1997) or "decayed" (Hägg [1997] 178), or "rotten" (Adrados [1999] 678), or such like as most students and translators of the text believe, but merely "ugly". The word and the relevant views are discussed in detail in Papademetriou (1993) 148–151.

her way and be damned" (*Perriana* 31.46.24). Xanthos becomes indignant, rebukes Aesop and declares his great love for his wife (*Perriana* 31.46.24): σιώπα, κάθαρμα, οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ αὐτὴν ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτόν; ("shut up, you trash. Don't you realize that I love her more than my life?"). Despite the assertiveness of the statement, Aesop is apparently surprised and incredulous, because he immediately asks him directly: "You love the woman?" (φιλεῖς τὸ γύναιον; *Perriana* 31.46.24–25). Xanthos declares anew his love for his wife, but Aesop remains skeptical and seeks further assurance by asking his master whether he wants his wife to stay with him (θέλεις οὖν ἵνα μένῃ; "you want her to stay?" *Perriana* 31.46.25). Annoyed, Xanthos replies θέλω ταπεινέ ("I do, you contemptible fool", *Perriana* 31.46.26). It is only after such scrutiny that Aesop finally seems convinced that Xanthos' feelings of love are genuine, whereupon he decides to help the desperate philosopher.[11] His help, however, takes a very strange form. First, he declares loudly that Xanthos is hen-pecked and threatens to expose him in the philosopher's lecture-halls. Next (Chapter 32, in both versions), Aesop berates his mistress vehemently. His tirade, which includes a striking quotation of four misogynic Euripidean verses (see below, note 80), and ends with his calling her "sex crazy" (Daly) and even "horse whore" (my translation).[12] He paints her as a scheming, debauched, lecherous wife (here we have the first appearance in the text of the phrase "lecherous wife", which will be discussed a little later), who intended to cuckold Xanthos with the exceptionally handsome young slave of her dream and so bring disgrace to her husband. It is certainly ironic and in a way "prophetic" that the accusation of prospective adultery with the handsome young slave is leveled by the hideously ugly slave with whom she will very soon cuckold the philosopher. Strangely, if not miraculously, Aesop's biting criticism of Xanthos and his wife has a calming effect on them, and thus the way is paved—albeit rather awkwardly—toward the next episode.

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[11] This is how the story unfolds in the *Perriana*; in the *Westermanniana*, the story is essentially the same, only abridged. The main difference in content is that in the latter version the praise of Aesop's "beauty" is very brief.

[12] See esp. *Perriana* 32.47.8–9: *σὺ δέ μοι δοκεῖς κινητιᾶν* [= *βινητιᾶν*] ... *ἱπποπόρνη*. The reading *ἱπποπόρνη*, its validity (the feminine form in *-η* is not listed in *LSJ*[9] and its *Supplements*), and its meaning in conjunction with relevant vocabulary and passages are discussed rather extensively in Papademetriou (1989) 86–88, esp. nn. 207–211; to the references listed there, we may add Shipp (1983) 101, and Jouanno (2006) 226 n. 56.

How seriously should we take Xanthos' declarations of love and his protective or considerate actions towards his wife (as exemplified, for instance, in his chastising Aesop for speaking ill of her, or in his sending her portions of food from a dinner that one of his disciples had organized [see also above, note 5] etc.)? In another instance, when in the presence of Xanthos Aesop remarks sarcastically and contemptuously (*Perriana* 32.47.14) μέγα πρᾶγμα, εἰ γύναιον καταπλήξει ἐπράϋνα ("a great accomplishment to have tamed a woman by overawing her"), the philosopher immediately reprimands him: *οὐᾶ, δραπέτα* ("Bah, you runaway!") Within the context of this episode his love seems convincingly true and sincere. Within the framework of the entire *Aesop Romance*, however, some doubts may not be entirely out of place. For example, the feelings he displays here toward his wife are certainly discordant with his teaching about women. At an earlier moment in the narrative, when Xanthos, following his wife's request to buy her "a nice slave" (*Perriana* 22.42.21–23), looks over some slaves for sale, but hesitates to buy Aesop because of his ugliness, his students remind him (*Westermanniana* 24.85.14–15)[13]: καθηγητά, αἱ πλείους σου διδαχαί εἰσι μὴ πείθεσθαι γυναικί ("Professor, most of your teachings are to the effect that one shouldn't pay attention to a woman"). This comment fits well with the misogynic spirit that permeates almost the entire work, as we shall see later. Be that as it may, a genuine love relationship undoubtedly requires the emotional participation of two persons. Xanthos' amorous feelings, however, are in no way reciprocated by his wife, to say the least. Not only is he henpecked and nagged by her; he is also ridiculed and grossly cuckolded, as we shall soon see. To adduce here evidence of her negative regard for and treatment of Xanthos seems hardly necessary for those familiar with the *Aesop Romance*. In any case, the following account of her sexual affair with their slave, Aesop, will suffice to underline the point.

The full story of Aesop's adultery with his master's wife[14] is found in only two manuscripts of the *Westermanniana*, Chapters 75–

[13] The *Perriana* has an extensive lacuna here, due to the loss of a leaf in cod. *G*; see p. 55 below with n. 19.

[14] The various patterns of ancient Greco-Roman adultery tales (including the one concerning Aesop and his mistress) are discussed in a paper by my distinguished former student Konstantakos (2006). This interesting, learned, and in-depth study of the subject reached me after the presentation of my paper and after its revision was almost complete; as a result it was not feasible to consider it fully here. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Konstantakos examines the story in the *Aesop Romance* from

76.[15] In the single codex preserving the *Perriana (G)*[16] most of the relevant narrative is lost.[17] The end of the story, however, is preserved, and this clearly indicates that the entire tale was included in it. The absence of the main part of the story is not due necessarily to censorship, as some scholars believe,[18] but to the loss of leaf in an ancestor of its only codex, *G.*[19]

As for the story itself, what we read is totally unexpected and barely credible. In view of Aesop's petulant behavior toward his mistress, his abominable appearance, which she found intolerable to look at, and her extremely disdainful response to his purchase, we suddenly read—with no little surprise—that the very same woman, in a lull[20] in their fighting was suddenly struck by what appears to be "love" for Aesop (εἰς ἔρωτα ἐτρώθη, *Westermanniana* 75.95.11–12). This sharp, startling change of heart occurs when she sees the impressive size of the slave's *membrum virile*.[21] The lustful predilection of females for large male organs is a stock motif primarily in ancient Comedy[22] but also in other texts,[23] and as such it hardly provides convincing evidence for the sincerity of her feelings of love towards Aesop. Actually, the word ἔρως[24] in this passage

an entirely different angle, as is evident even from the title of his paper, and that our conclusions pertain to different aspects of the story.

15 A fact first noted in Marc (1910) 389–390. The entire story is also missing in the Planudean adaptation.

16 *G* = *siglum* for codex 397 of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York.

17 This missing part is preserved both in the *Westermanniana* and in a papyrus, probably of the third century AD; see Haslam (1980).

18 See Adrados (1979) 95, and Luzzatto (1996) 359.

19 See primarily Perry (1936) 7–11 and (1952) 43 n. 155 with the references therein.

20 Although there is no plausible reason for this lull in the narrative (see Chapter 32 in both versions), it is necessary as a prelude for the sexual episode that follows.

21 *Westermanniana* 75.95.10–11: θεασαμένη δὲ ἐκείνη τὸ μῆκος καὶ τὸ πάχος τῆς αἰδοῦς αὐτοῦ ἑάλω ("when the woman saw how long and thick it [the *membrum virile*] was, her lust was aroused").

22 In ancient Comedy large phalluses are viewed with favor; see, e.g., what may be the *locus classicus* in Aristophanes, *Pax* 1349–1350: τοῦ μὲν μέγα καὶ παχὺ τῆς δὲ ἡδὺ τὸ σῦκον. See also *Acharnenses* 785–787: κέρκον ... μεγάλαν τε καὶ παχεῖαν κἠρυθράν, and also *Lysistrata* 23–24. See also the undeservedly overlooked book of Εὔιος Ληναίου [= pen-name of X.X. Χαριτωνίδης] (1935) 45 n. 12, and 53, *al.* (a greatly revised and expanded version of this valuable book, found recently in manuscript, is expected to appear soon in print through the auspices of Prof. S. Tsitsiridis of the University of Patras); see also another valuable book, Henderson (1975) 115–116 *al.*

23 Cf., e.g., Thierfelder (1968) no. 251, where a married woman has sexual intercourse with a stupid slave, attracted by his large phallus. See Εὔιος Ληναίου (1935) 45 n. 12 and 53 n. 47.

24 I summarize here my argument in Papademetriou (1997) 64 n. 100, namely, that in

(juxtaposed with the verb ἐτρώθη) should be understood as meaning simply "fervent sexual desire", or "lust"[25] as Daly (1961) and Wills (1997) translate *ad loc*.

The prevalent opinion among those who have dealt with the subject seems to be that she fell in "love" when she caught sight of Aesop's large *phallos* while he was masturbating (the Greek text is quoted immediately below).[26] Such sexual activity reminds us again of similar scenes in ancient Comedy,[27] and this may have made it easier for many scholars in the field to believe that this is also what is taking place here. A digression is required at this point, however, in order to challenge this interpretation, which does not seem to find satisfactory support in the text.

What we read in the text (*Westermanniana* 75.95.7–8) is that Aesop ἐκδυσάμενος καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἑαυτοῦ κροτῶν καὶ τινάσσων, ἤρξατο ποιεῖν τὸ ποιμενικὸν καὶ ἄτακτον σχῆμα "after taking his clothes off, clapping and shaking [or, throwing] his hands he started doing *τὸ ποιμενικὸν καὶ ἄτακτον σχῆμα*" (my literal translation). These last Greek words are not easy to translate. The translation usually offered is "sexual self-

the *Perriana* almost the entire vocabulary of love is missing; even the common verb *ἐρῶ* is never used in any sense. Incidentally, the above study is not "Gesammelte Aufsätze" as erroneously stated in Eideneier (2000) 199 n. 2.

[25] Cf. note 45 below, for a scene of collective female eagerness for sex in our text.

[26] See, e.g., Daly (1961): "Aesop lifted up his clothes and took his member in his hand so as to stimulate it. Xanthos' wife saw him and said, 'Aesop what is this?' Aesop replied, 'Lady, I was cold during the night, and it helps me if I hold it in my hand'." However, in the sentences printed immediately above, Daly is no longer following the text of the *Westermanniana*. He may have thought that its text could not be translated satisfactorily, and hence he tacitly switched to the text of the Latin version, the *Lolliniana*, which is far easier to understand here; see Perry (1936) 8–9 and (1952) 127. Wills (1997), at the beginning seems to follow Daly, but subsequently tries to cope with some of the problems: "he lifted his garments and began to rub himself with his hands to stimulate himself in a rude and lascivious manner. When Xanthos' wife came unexpectedly ... she said, 'Aesop what is this?' Aesop answers, 'I'm performing a good deed for myself. This helps my stomach'." The view that Aesop is here engaged in autoeroticism is almost the *opinio communis* among scholars in the field; see, e.g., Winkler (1985) 281; Goins (1989) 28; Ferrari (1997) 29; Hägg (1997) 188; Pervo (1998) 89–90; Adrados (1999) 680; Jouanno (2006), esp. 233 n. 107; Papathomopoulos (1990) 112, gives a rather unsuitable translation, sidestepping the fact that in the text the adjective *ἄτακτον* qualifies the substantive *σχῆμα* (not the adjective *ποιμενικόν*): γδύθηκε κι ἄρχισε νὰ βαράει τὰ χέρια του καὶ νὰ τὰ τινάζει καὶ νὰ κάνει τὶς χειρονομίες ποὺ κάνουν οἱ ποιμένες ὅταν εἶναι ἄτακτοι ... = "he took off his clothes and started hitting his hands and shaking ["dusting"? "throwing"?] them and making the gestures that herdsmen do, when they are unruly" (my translation).

[27] See Εὔιος Ληναίου (1935) 89–90; Henderson (1975) 220–221.

satisfaction", but it is far from satisfactory. Why did Aesop have to take off his loose ancient clothes, and how could he perform this action while clapping and shaking his hands? Besides, when his mistress saw him doing whatever he was doing and asked him what it was (75.95.9), Aesop answered that it was something beneficial for him and also for his belly.[28] Taken together the foregoing observations show that Aesop was not indulging here in sexual self-gratification.[29]

As if under a spell by the mere sight of Aesop's oversize male organ, his mistress summons him to her quarters and propositions him[30] frivolously, with no scruples or fear, and as if she had never shown abhorrence for him. Despite his vengeful disposition towards his master (see below, p. 60) Aesop initially hesitated to go along out of fear for the consequences, should Xanthos find out.[31] Then, in order to entice him and make him overcome his fears (not "his loyalty towards his master")[32] his mistress promises him something that Aesop must have dearly wanted, new clothes[33] (*Westermanniana* 75.95.14: στολήν σοι ἱματίων χαρίσομαι),[34] and seals her promise with an oath. Aesop now agrees, although she had stipulated that he would be obliged to engage in sexual intercourse with her[35] ten times in succession.[36]

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[28] *Westermanniana* 75.95.10: εὐεργετοῦμαι καὶ τὴν γαστέρα ὠφελεῖ ("I'm performing a good deed for myself. This helps my stomach", Wills' translation).

[29] What is then the *ποιμενικὸν καὶ ἄτακτον σχῆμα*? I am not able to give a precise answer, but I presume that it is some kind of physical exercise, some form of gymnastics.

[30] His mistress "seduces" Aesop, not the other way around; the opposite view is expressed in Hopkins (1993) 18, where we find an otherwise fitting presentation of the social and psychological parameters of the situation.

[31] See *Westermanniana* 75.95.13–14: ἐὰν ὁ δεσπότης μου τοῦτο μάθῃ οὐ μικρὸν ἐπάξιον λυγρὸν ἀνταμείψει ("if my master finds out about this, he will be justified in punishing me severely", as translated in Wills 1997).

[32] As Papathomopoulos maintains (1990) 26. Undoubtedly, committing adultery was obviously very dangerous for both of them.

[33] Not his liberty, as argued in Daube (1977) 176.

[34] Daly (1961) translates the gift promised here as "shirt" and Wills (1997) repeats this rendition, while Ferrari (1997) writes "un bel mantello". Adrados (1979) 95, speaks of "a garment made by the woman", i.e., Aesop's mistress, but nothing in the text indicates that she was inclined to weaving etc.; the translation offered in Papathomopoulos (1990) seems the most accurate: μιὰ φορεσιά ("a set of garments", my translation).

[35] In ancient authors there are several stories of slaves having sex with their mistresses; see, e.g., Aelian, *De natura animalium* 8.20, where beautiful Alcinoe ὡμίλει τῶν θεραπόντων τινί, when her husband went on a journey; see also Juvenal 6.279 *iacet* [the adulteress] *in servi complexibus*; also, Petronius 45, where a slave *deprehensus est, cum dominam suam delectaretur*. See also note 48 below.

[36] Mention of repetitive, consecutive sexual contact is often found in Comedy and

Following the agreement and her demand for immediate satisfaction, Aesop sets about its performance and manages well in the first nine installments. On the last count, however, he fails on a technicality by spending himself on the outside. The woman protests and refuses to give him the stipulated reward saying, "I called on you to plow [or dig] my field, but you crossed the property line and worked in another field. Do it once more, and take the clothes" (ἐγὼ εἰς τὸν ἐμόν σε ἐμισθωσάμην ἀγρὸν σκάπτειν· σὺ δὲ ὑπερβὰς τὸ μεσότοιχον εἰς τὰ τοῦ γείτονος ἔσκαψας. ἀπόδος οὖν καὶ λάβε τὴν στολήν, *Westermanniana* 75.95.20–22). Here a question arises: Why didn't this impudent, lewd, brassy woman make her protest to Aesop in direct language and literal terms? Why did she choose metaphorical language? Two observations could be made here. Of course, the wording of her protest does not fit her character, and this once more shows that the author was not at pains to give us a consistent, psychologically convincing portrayal of the woman. He was more interested in *double entendres*, like *ἀγρός* (field),[37] and *σκάπτειν* (to dig),[38] which have strong sexual connotations.

Subsequently, Aesop surprisingly appeals to the woman's husband, Xanthos, to be the judge in the case. He presumptuously trusts that

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other texts, but the number of times that Aesop was expected to satisfy his demanding mistress tops all Greek literary precedents known. For similar cases, see Henderson (1975) 121; Εὔιος Ληναίου (1935) 45. Aesop's record, however, is equaled and even exceeded later, in an almost identical story cited in Perry (1960) 14 n. 31. It is also exceeded in the reworking of this story by Balzac, where the number of *fututiones* becomes twelve; see Daube (1977) 177.

[37] Obviously, Xanthos' wife here uses the word "field" with reference to her genitals. Words meaning "field" were widely used metaphorically in the senses "wife", "woman" or *pudenda* not only in comic or popular literature; see e.g. Sophocles, *Antigone* 569, where king Kreon says, ἀρώσιμοι … χἀτέρων εἰσὶν γύαι [*ὁ γύης,-ου* = field]; see further Haupt (1916 / 1917) 418–419, where several Biblical, Near Eastern, and kindred Greek parallels are cited, including one in the Syriac version of the *Book of Sindbad*; Haupt observes (p. 419) that "this usage … survives in our 'seed' = 'progeny' "; also Εὔιος Ληναίου (1935) 59 n. 52; 27 n. 12; Henderson (1975) 135 nn. 128–130; Konstantakos (2006) 89; and the references in the following note.

[38] Verbs denoting *σκάπτειν, ἀροῦν* and at least some of their synonyms were often used with a sexual meaning in both Greek and Latin. See, e.g., Plautus, *Asinaria* 1.874 (V.2.24): *fundum alienum arat incultum familiarem deserit.* Cf. *Truculentus* 2.48. See also Haupt (1916 / 1917) and Εὔιος Ληναίου (1935) 59 n. 52; 27 n. 12; van Dijk (1995) 143 n. 60; see also the quotations in the preceding note above and Henderson (1975) 168 nn. 292 and 293. The metaphorical use of the above verbs as well as of the word for "field" and its synonyms has survived at least in Boccaccio; see Konstantakos (2006) 597 with n. 97.

he can convey the gist of the situation without raising suspicion and confident that Xanthos would swallow his fictitious tale without questioning it. Indeed, Aesop does win his case by pleading it in terms of a parable relating to knocking fruit off a tree: He alleges that he brought down ten pieces, but the tenth, he says, had fallen into the manure, and his mistress refused to include it in the count. The woman speaks her part, also using the terms of Aesop's parable, and confirms his story. Although her husband naively takes their story literally, asking the injured person to adjudicate or arbitrate the case is tempting fate and a rather arrogant, audacious act on the part of Aesop that entwines his own boldness and the contempt he feels for his master with the philosopher's gullibility. Were Xanthos not so gullible, he might have observed that the fictitious bet was on very unequal terms (a set of clothes for ten pieces of fruit [ten κοκκύμηλα],[39] while Aesop did not risk any material loss or physical penalty should he fail) and also between very unlikely contestants. Aesop's mistress could have simply ordered him to bring her ten κοκκύμηλα; she did not need to bet or risk losing anything. Nevertheless, the philosopher does not at all question this childish story. Subsequently, his wife demands that Aesop must first make up for the shortfall and knock one more fruit off the tree before she gives him the clothes. The philosopher rules that Aesop should get the gift, but immediately afterwards urges him to honor his obligation towards his mistress by knocking one fruit off the tree during a walk that the two of

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[39] The name of the tree that produces *κοκκύμηλα* seems to have survived in some parts of Greece as "κοκκυμηλιά"; see Gennadios (1914 / 1997), s.v. "Κοκκυμηλέα" (*Prunus insititia*) = "κορομηλιά" in Modern Greek. It is, however, stated *ibid.* that in antiquity two other kinds of fruit also bore that name, "plum" and "apricot". There is considerable disagreement among classicists too regarding the identification of "κοκκυμηλέα", as evidenced by the variety of translations given for its fruit. *Κοκκύμηλον* in *LSJ*[9] is translated as "plum" and the tree as "plum-tree, *Prunus domestica*". In the Medieval Latin translation of the text called *Lolliniana* [see Perry (1952) 29–30], the fruit is repeatedly called "apple" (*malum*). Modern translators and students of our text, however, offer an assortment of renditions: Daly (1961) "apple"; Daube (1977) 176 "apple"; Ferrari (1997) "prugna" ~ plum, and Wills (1997) "plum", while Papathomopoulos (1990) proffers "apricot". Be that as it may, the important point here is not the identification of the fruit, but rather its associations and connotations. The second component in its name is *μῆλον*, the word for "apple", a fruit closely associated with love and Aphrodite, a fact discussed in detail already in Crusius (1895) 25–26; see also Daube (1977) 176. This close association allows us to think that word play may be involved here and mockery of the cuckold husband, Xanthos, who—ever ignorant of the true nature of the dispute—urges Aesop to knock off a *κοκκύμηλον* once more.

them were about to take. They would together give the extra fruit to the woman upon their return, and then Aesop would get the gift she had promised.[40] In the *Westermanniana*, 76.95.33, the comical absurdity of the situation is further sharpened, for Xanthos does not simply urge Aesop to do his task one more time, but pleads with him to do so for *his*, *Xanthos'*, sake. He phrases his plea using the first person plural, thus making himself a "participant" in the action, and—far more important—uses an "ethical dative" (or, at least, a *dativus commodi*), which makes him a beneficiary of the action: ἐκτινάξεις *μοι* τὰ κοκκύμηλα ὅπως ... τῇ κυρίᾳ ἐνέγκω*μεν* (the form ἐνέγκω*μεν* is also the reading of the *Perriana*).[41] This looks like a parody of tragic irony, and in order to characterize correctly the situation here, we need to resort to an oxymoron such as "mock" (or "comical") "tragic irony".

It is evident that the motivation of both participants in that sexual marathon had nothing to do with the emotion called love.[42] Aesop felt neither love nor physical attraction toward his mistress. His motive was primarily revenge, because of his master's refusal to grant him his freedom in the preceding episode. Actually, his motivation is stated explicitly in *Westermanniana* 74.95.5–6: Αἴσωπος ... ἀχαριστηθεὶς ἐλυπήθη καί φησι [sc. τῷ Ξάνθῳ] "μεῖνόν με· ἐγώ σε ἀνταμυνοῦμαι" ("Aesop [was] aggrieved at his master's ingratitude and told him 'just wait. I'll get even with you'").[43] Besides, Aesop's motivation (revenge rather than love or even carnal desire) fits very well the general pattern of his relations with his mistress, which is clearly antagonistic[44] throughout the relevant parts of the narrative. This pattern is so manifest that to cite here the abundant evidence would be to labour the point. With regard to the motivation of Aesop's mistress or her seizure by lust,[45] we may

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[40] At about this point, the narrative in the *Perriana* resumes, but has no substantial differences from the text of the *Westermanniana*.

[41] It may amuse some scholars to read that a translation/adaptation of this story was made by Ed. MacGrath (once a student of mine in the USA) and published in the racy American magazine *Playboy* in February 1974.

[42] Adrados (1979b) 356, in discussing this extravagant sexual incident, recognizes that no emotion is involved.

[43] In the *Perriana*, 74.59.3, Aesop is also aggrieved "at his master's ingratitude" (ἐπὶ τὸ ἀχαριστηθῆναι).

[44] Aesop's relations with his mistress are also very antagonistic in a fable of Phaedrus, *Appendix* 17, but the context is different.

[45] In the text, she is described as *καπριῶσα*, which means a woman "in heat"; see Papademetriou (1989) 59–60. The use of this noteworthy word here reminds us of the

easily see that it is not realistically convincing, while it is also psychologically inadequate, especially in view of their mutual animosity (see above, pp. 52–53). It serves, however, to set the scene (as in a fable) and thus functions as the starting point for an anecdote or an independent ribald story (probably another "Milesian tale"), adopted, adapted or invented (it makes no difference in this instance) by the unknown, playful author of the *Aesop Romance*, in order to spice up his narrative. In other words, what we read in the text (i.e., that she overcomes her repulsion and hatred for Aesop as soon as she sets her eyes upon his extraordinarily large male organ) is simply a slender excuse that provides the author with the opportunity to include the story for its value as entertainment and also as parody as we shall see shortly. It is not meant to provide realistic, convincing motivation for her sudden infatuation with her monstrous slave. The author uses a stock motif of comic narratives, the appeal to women of large phalluses, which is found already in Old Comedy.[46] Alongside the stereotypical motif mentioned above, another comic motif, that of the "lecherous wife",[47] also comes into play. The specific variant of the motif, "adultery of slave with his mistress" is already attested in Aristophanes. In *Thesmoph.* 491–492 we read about women: ὑπὸ τῶν δούλων τε κὠρεωκόμων / σποδούμεθ', ἢν μὴ 'χωμεν ἕτερον ("we have slaves and muleteers if we can't get anyone better",[48] Dickinson's translation[49]). It occurs also in fables and other texts,[50]

scene in Chapters 29–30 in both versions, where we find a description of the almost hysterical excitement of the maidservants stirred at Xanthos' announcement that he has bought an exceptionally handsome new slave. In their fight over the new slave, whom they all intensely desire to have as a lover or husband, the most aggressive of the maids is also characterized as *καπρῶσα* (*Westermanniana* 30.86.28). In the Latin version, the *Lolliniana*, the participle becomes a proper name, Kapriosa, applied to that character.

[46] See above, p. 55 n. 22.

[47] A prime characteristic of female lecherousness seems to be women's alleged proclivity to adultery (see also following note). On unfaithful wives see discussion and many references in Trenkner (1958) 84–86. Fables dealing with this matter are found among those listed by La Penna (1961) 526 n. 113. Concern over female marital infidelity was strong already in classical Athens; see Olson (1998) *ad v.* 980 (comment on *μοιχευόμεναι*) and his references to relevant passages and secondary literature.

[48] See the examples in n. 35 above, and more instances in Trenkner (1958) 86.

[49] Dickinson 1970.

[50] See, e.g., Phaedrus, *Appendix* 17; also La Penna (1961) 526 n. 113. The theme occurs also in a later, famed storybook, *The Book of Sindbad*; see Jernstedt (1912) 22–24.

and especially mimes,[51] while in more recent times Balzac and other writers have used it.[52]

If we look at the story of Aesop's sexual affair with his mistress as a whole two general observations are in order:

1) The entire story is written in a lively style, with direct dialog expressing divergent views and interests, and peppered with irony and a touch of suspense. It could have served by itself as a self-contained story, because it stands complete and contrives to entertain even in isolation from the rest of the *Aesop Romance*. On the other hand, its inherent theatrical potential is such that it could easily have been taken from a comedy or a mime or suchlike. Conversely, this very potential makes it easy to adapt and insert as an episode into a comedy or a mime or to use it as a separate story or in some kind of lowbrow collection of entertaining narratives such as the *turpes ioci* mentioned by Ovid, *Trist.* 2,443 f. (Milesian tales).

2) Considering Aesop's sexual affair with his mistress from a different perspective, we see that this erotic burlesque story has several close analogies with the canonical Greek novels. This is not a case of similarity, but rather of deliberate, consistent contrast which when viewed as a whole reveals itself as parody. A core theme in the novels is the "love at first sight"[53] between a young man and a suitably young woman. The young lovers are of aristocratic descent, of great physical beauty

[51] The most frequently cited example is a mime found in a papyrus of the second cent. AD (*POxy*. 413*verso*) and composed probably a century earlier, that has become known as *Μοιχεύτρια* (*Adulteress*), a title given to it by Crusius; see v. Christ/Schmid/Stählin (^{6}1920) 337–338, who also mention the kinship of the text with a mime of Herodas and also with motifs found in Heliodoros and the Byzantine author Constantinos Manasses. Aesop is the name of a central character in the plot of *Μοιχεύτρια*, whose mistress seems to desire him. As in the thematically similar mime of Herodas (Mime V, *Ζηλότυπος*) Aesop and *Γάστρων* (the coveted slave in Herodas) suffer beating ordered by their respective female owners for their alleged involvement with another woman. The editions of *Μοιχεύτρια* are conveniently listed in Konstantakos (2006) 595 n. 91. To his bibliography one might add Manteuffel (1930). Noteworthy is the Dissertation by G. Winter, *De mimis Oxyrrhynchiis*, Lipsiae 1906 (also noted in v. Christ/Schmid/Stählin, *op. cit.* p. 338 n. 3, but without information on its contents) cited in Manteuffel (p. 49, n. 7), on the language of this and of another mime, *Χαρίτιον* (again, so named by Crusius).

[52] See Perry (1960) 14 n. 31 (where his earlier treatments of the subject are listed); Daube (1977) 177; also, Papademetriou (1997) 43, esp. n. 67.

[53] Examples are cited in Konstan (1994) 47 n. 46, a book that offers a stimulating, in-depth study of love in the ancient novels.

and, although they fall in love as soon as they meet, are also imbued with moral rectitude. They are usually separated against their will, but their love is so strong that it never fades in the face of numerous tribulations, hazards, and obstacles, which must be overcome before they meet again and live together in blissful happiness ever after. By contrast, in the *Aesop Romance* episode the male, the hideously ugly and loathsome Aesop, is the exact opposite of the handsome hero of the novels, and as for his social status he occupies the lowest possible position, that of a mere slave. We are not told anything about the age, the appearance or the ancestral background of the female "heroine", Aesop's mistress, but she cannot have been a prize catch either, to judge from her overall behavior. She looks forward to the purchase of a handsome slave to satisfy her lustful fantasies, as Aesop had said earlier (Chapter 32, in both versions), and there is nothing aristocratic in the manner of her conduct. Her sexual infatuation with Aesop does not strike her when she first sees him (she knew Aesop, abhorred his ugliness, and had even vehemently quarreled with him earlier, in Chapters 31–32 of both versions), but when she first casts her eyes on her slave's large phallus. This was enough for her and revealing enough for us; the situation may be called "lust at first sight" (of a large male organ, even if it belongs to a terribly ugly slave). The parody of the novelistic topos is conspicuous, and it does not stop there. This kind of attraction is clearly a parody of the deep, emotional love at first sight that strikes two very attractive young persons of noble descent in the ancient novels. In these ideal novels the authors keep sensuality at bay, while here we have a woman's direct demand for immediate, adulterous, multiple intercourse. Furthermore, this is to take place in exchange for a kind of payment, something of monetary value that she would give Aesop; her approach is in sharp contrast with the reciprocal emotional love of the protagonists in the novels. In addition and in another sharp contrast to the long-lasting bond that nourishes the spirit of the pair of lovers in the novels (and along with it, the novel's plot), what we find in our text is the fulfillment of a transient whim on the woman's part, which temporarily brings together the two unlikely sexual partners. There are no expressions of affection, let alone love, no words of endearment or even plain flattery if only to pave the way to sexual contact. And, of course, there is no lasting bond or attachment. Their "erotic" relationship is fleeting, beginning and ending in a single episode. As soon as sexual intercourse has taken place and the mistress has had her pleasure, the two characters resume their former antagonistic roles.

If we accept that the foregoing analogies constitute a parody of love as portrayed in the canonical or ideal Greek novels, then as a corollary we gain some welcome evidence for the relative chronology of the texts involved. A parody of the love romances could not predate those works, and such parody would not find an appreciative or responsive audience or even make much sense before those romances were widely read and—very likely—before they had become a recognizable type of literary creation.

Had he wished to introduce such an element in his work, the story with the best potential for the author to speak of some kind of love with emotional involvement, of true *eros*, is the one that involves Aesop's adopted son, Ainos (Chapter 103, in both versions). Here we have a well educated young man of noble lineage who risks his life when he becomes involved with a woman, because she is a concubine of his king. This woman is presumably young, but obviously neither a virgin seeking a life-long bond nor imbued with the ideal of fidelity. The author leaves no room for illusion: "The young man began to get a big head, became involved with the king's concubine, and was enjoying the sport".[54] In the other version his motive is described as plain, undiluted lust.[55] Aesop, seeing that Ainos is risking death, tries to make him stop.[56] Ainos, however, is angered and through false charges causes Aesop to be condemned to death. So much for erotic emotions (let alone filial devotion) in this episode!

Of the three ribald tales mentioned above (p. 50), two are coarse, facetious stories embedded into the narrative that provide some comic entertainment, but they are not part of Aesop's life. The third, Fable 379 Perry, is of an entirely different character. There has also been some controversy with regard to its place in the text because the textual situation is unusual. The fable as preserved in the *Westermanniana* does not seem to be the same as the one in the *Perriana*. In the latter version

[54] *Perriana* 103.67.14–17: ὁ δὲ νεανίσκος μέγα ποιήσας ἅμα τῇ τοῦ βασιλέως παλλακίδι περιπλακεὶς ἐπιχαρὴς ἐγένετο προσπαίζων.

[55] *Westermanniana* 103.100.27: ὁ … Αἶνος γαμητιῶν …

[56] *Perriana* 103.67.14–15: "Aesop saw this and was so angered that he repeatedly threatened him, saying that anyone who touched the king's woman was bringing on his own death" (ὁ δὲ Αἴσωπος ἰδὼν καὶ ἀγανακτήσας πυκνὸν αὐτῷ ἠπείλησεν, εἰπὼν βασιλικῆς ὁ παρὰ νόμον ἁπτόμενος θάνατον ἐνακμᾶται (vel potius ἐναγ⟨καλίζε⟩ται pro ἐνακμᾶται ut fortasse recte prop. Charitonides [1952] 108 et adopt. Ferrari [1997]; ἑ⟨αυτῷ⟩ ἐν ἄκμ⟨ονι χαλκεύε⟩ται coniecit et ed. Papathomopoulos [1990], radically rewriting the text). The various conjectures and translations proposed are discussed on pp. 177–178 in Papademetriou [1993]).

the fable proper is lost, and only the comments that Aesop makes are preserved, which, however, do not fit satisfactorily the corresponding fable of the *Westermanniana*. Hence, Perry in his *Aesopica*[57] justifiably argues that the original fable in the *Aesop Romance* must have been one with which the remnants in Chapter 141 of the *Perriana* would be compatible. Clearly, this is not the case. Thus, he believes that in the *Westermanniana* the original story was replaced at some stage in the transmission of the text by the fable that we read there now and propose to examine here, Fable 379 Perry.[58]

This story is neither facetious, nor entertaining, nor edifying.[59] One may, in fact, call it grotesque or worse. It is the story of a lecherous father who became enamored of his own daughter and raped her.[60] This is hardly the kind of story that one might include because of a predilection for *eros*.[61]

The other tale, found in Chapter 131~Fable 386 Perry, is an instantiation representative example of the motif "*Seduction of person ignorant of sexual intercourse*".[62] As far as the tradition of Aesop's fables is concerned this latter fable is a new one, preserved only in both versions in the *Life of Aesop*. This is one of the *λόγοι* Aesop narrates to insult his

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57 Perry (1952) 19–20.

58 In his stimulating monograph *Aesop at Delphi*, Wiechers (1961) 14, and n. 19, disputes Perry's view, on the grounds that Fable 379 could not possibly have existed outside the framework of our text; consequently, it must have been an integral part of it from the beginning. This claim is refuted, however, by the fact that the motif of the story, strange as it may seem in view of its incestuous character, is found in many cultures, as evidenced by the relevant entries, T411. and 411.1., in Thompson's (²1955–1958) *Motif-Index*.

59 Van Dijk (1995) 149, however, soundly objects to Adrados' calling the story an attack on incest.

60 "A man fell in love with his own daughter … sent his wife off to the country and forced himself upon his daughter. She said, 'Father, this is an unholy thing you are doing. I would rather have submitted to a hundred men than to you'." For other instances of incestuous relations, see Rohde (³1914) 37 ff.

61 This story or *λόγος*, as it is called in the text, is narrated by Aesop, when he "was on the point of being thrown over the cliff by the Delphians", as Perry has observed (Perry [1965] 488). Although the daughter here stands for Aesop, and the father for the Delphians, the story does not seem to fit the situation well.

62 Thompson [²1955–1958] K1363; the occurrence of the motif in Greek literature is not recorded by Thompson. The motif resurfaces in the story of Alibech and Rustico in Boccaccio' *Decameron* 3.10; see Perry (1960) 14–15 or (1962) 332. For a discussion of the story in our text, see van Dijk (1995) 143–144. On a rather widespread variant of the motif, namely, seduction of the innocent in the guise of a god, see abundant references and discussion in Trenkner (1958) 133–134.

enemies rather than to win them over.[63] Knowing by now that his death is unavoidable, and, like a hero in a classical tragedy, makes his actions fit his fate so as to give it a measure of justification. The story is about a mother and her daughter who is obviously very naive or somewhat retarded. The mother prayed to the gods to give her daughter some sense, and the daughter often heard her mother in these prayers. Once, when out in the country together, the daughter wandered off and witnessed a man coupling with a female donkey. She asked the man what he was doing, and he replied, "I'm putting sense in her".[64] The girl begged him to do the same for her, so the man left the donkey and deflowered her. (In the *Perriana* 131.75.35, the man at first demurred saying, οὐδὲν ἀχαριστότερον γυναικός = "nothing is more thankless than a woman"). Afterwards she ran back to her mother and told her proudly that she now did possess sense (νοῦν)![65] On further relating how she had come by that longed-for blessing,[66] her mother commented ruefully (in both versions): "my child you've lost what sense you had!" (ἀπώλεσας καὶ ὃν πρῶτον εἶχες νοῦν.)[67]

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[63] A sentence preserved in substance in Chapter 140 of both versions shows that Aesop's fables in the earlier part of his altercation with the Delphians were understood by them as an effort to make them spare his life. The text states that "the Delphians were not deterred but took him off and stood him on the cliff" (οἱ Δέλφιοι μὴ ἀνασχόμενοι ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν καὶ ἔστησαν ἐπὶ τὸν κρημνόν, *Perriana* 141.76.34–35 ~ *Westermanniana* 140.107.6–7, in more detail: οἱ δὲ τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ λεγομένοις μὴ πεισθέντες ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸν κρημνὸν καὶ ἔστησαν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἄκρου). Moreover, Aesop himself admits that he was trying to make them change their mind: "Since I've used all kinds of argument without persuading you" (*Perriana* 140.77.34–35: ἐπειδὴ παντοίως ὑμῖν ὁμιλῶ καὶ οὐ πείθεσθέ μοι ~ *Westermanniana* 140.107.8: ἐπεὶ παντοίως ὑμᾶς οὐ πείθω). It is only when he fails that he uses two vituperative and insulting fables: the one in which he likens the Delphians to *ὀνάρια* (donkeys, Fable 381 Perry), and the repugnant story about the father who rapes his daughter (Fable 379 Perry), which we discuss here.

[64] Not "I'm making her see sense", as suggested by the anonymous referee in van Dijk (1995) 143–144, and n. 63. Their dialog in Greek, *Perriana* 131.75.14–15: "νοῦν ἐντίθημι αὐτῇ. ..." "ἔνθες καὶ ἐμοὶ νοῦν" and *Westermanniana* 131.105.37: "νοῦν αὐτῇ ἐντίθημι" ... "ἔνθες, ἄνθρωπε, κἀμοὶ νοῦν". Their exchange sounds like a humorous adaptation of a line by Pherecrates, preserved in Stob. 4.50.56: νῦν ἄρτι μοι τὸ γῆρας ἐντίθησι νοῦν.

[65] On the play between the words *νόος/ὄνος*, see Wiechers (1961) 9 n. 5, and Nagy (1980) 283, note §6nl; opposing view in van Dijk (1996) 359.

[66] For a textual problem here with regard to the man's action, see Papademetriou (1980) 36–37 ~ (1989) 80–81.

[67] Aesop applies this unpleasant thought to himself in *Perriana* 131.75.22: ἀπώλεσα καὶ ὃν πρῶτον εἶχον νοῦν εἰς Δελφοὺς εἰσελθών ("I've lost what sense I had in coming to Delphi"). Similar remarks appropriately conclude Fable 214 Perry [~ Thompson (^{2}1955–1958) J958], about a mole (an animal that cannot see) whose mother exclaims after he made a gross mistake that his sense of smell should have prevented, ὦ τέκνον,

The last story to be considered here is the celebrated "Milesian tale",[68] known as the Widow or Matron of Ephesos. This tale is found not only in three Greek and Roman writers, but also in the vernacular literature of many other cultures.[69] The bibliography on the tale is so extensive that it would be foolhardy to attempt to cite it here.[70] In any case, we shall limit the scope of our study to the three Greco-Roman sources, namely the *Aesop Romance* (Chapter 129, Fable 388), Phaedrus (*Appendix* 15~Fable 543 Perry), and Petronius (111–112),[71] and to a Byzantine/post-Byzantine version in verse, apparently unknown to scholars in Classics (see, however, below, note 94).

In the *Aesop Romance* this tale has the unadorned brevity and simplicity of Aesopic stories.[72] "A woman who had buried her husband was sitting beside his tomb and weeping uncontrollably. A man who was plowing [a field nearby] saw her and conceived a desire for her. He left his … oxen … and came over to her pretending to be himself weeping as well. She paused and asked him why he was weeping. The plowman replied that he had buried a good wife and weeping lightened the

οὐ μόνον τοῦ βλέπειν ἐστέρησαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ὀσφρήσεις ἀπώλεσας ("Ah, my child" [said his mother], "you are not only bereft of sight, but you have also lost your sense of smell", Perry's translation of Babrius [1965] 463). Also, in Fable 214a Perry, the brothers of another mole who had made a glaring mistake remark: θέλων τι μέγα ποιῆσαι καὶ πνοῆς ἧς εἶχες ἐστέρησαι δικαίως ("In trying to do something smart you have also lost such sense of smell as you had before, and it serves you right", Perry's translation *ibid.*). Van Dijk (1995) 144 n. 65, correctly connects the two fables. However, despite his usual admirable thoroughness and accuracy, and probably misled by the inclusion of Fable 214 in Hausrath's edition, he writes on the same page that "this fable is included in the collections" [of Aesop's fables]. Actually, the fable to which he refers (304 Hausrath) does not come from the collections, but was culled from the *Aesop Romance* (see the *app. crit.* of Hausrath).

68 See Perry (1967) 94.

69 See, e.g., Spadaro (1972) 449 with notes. Originally this must have been an orally transmitted folk narrative.

70 Copious bibliography is cited in the footnotes to Chapter 9 ("Die Witwe von Ephesus"), pp. 336–361, of Müller (2006). See also Spadaro (1972) 449; van Dijk (1996) 539 n. 74, and (1995) 142–143, esp. n. 51. There is also an Internet site containing bibliography on the subject compiled by John Porter (work in progress). In a review by Stefan Tilg in the *Bryn Mawr Review of Books* 2006.09.22, it is stated "that the website dedicated to the Widow of Ephesus has moved to: http://homepage.usask.ca/~jrp638/widow/widowframes/index.html".

71 The relation between these three versions is discussed in Perry (1962) 329–330. Perry concludes (I believe correctly) that the original form of the story is the one in the *Aesop Romance*, because it is simpler and not so cynical as the Roman versions. See also below, note 74.

72 In recounting this story, I use Daly's translation as reprinted in Perry (1965) 493.

burden of his grief. The woman said that she was in a similar situation, and weeping lightened her grief also. Pointing to the similarity of their situation, the plowman said, 'Why don't we get to know one another? I'll love you as I did her, and you ... me as you did your husband'." The woman was persuaded. "But while he took his pleasure of her, someone drove off his oxen. When the plowman returned [to his field] and didn't find his oxen, he began to weep and shout in earnest." The woman then asked what he was wailing about, and "the plowman said: 'Woman, now *I've* got something to mourn' ".[73]

In Phaedrus the story becomes longer, more complex, and more misogynic. A gruesome tinge is also added. A woman of great beauty lost her beloved husband and had his body buried *in sepulchro*. She stayed at the tomb and spent all her time mourning her lost husband, a fact that was seen as clear proof of her chastity. Not for long, however. One day, some criminals who had plundered the sanctuary of Jupiter were crucified (cf. Chariton 4.2.6–7) near the sepulcher, and soldiers were stationed there to guard the corpses. Once, one of the guards felt thirsty during the night and walked over to the sepulcher and asked for water. There he happened to see the beautiful widow and began visiting her on various pretexts. It was not long before he began to lust for her. The daily contact had an effect on the woman, too, and a sexual affair began between the two of them, which distracted the soldier from his duties. One day, he discovered that one of the bodies was missing from its cross.[74] He was desperate, but the widow easily resolved his desperate predicament. Without hesitating, she gave him her beloved husband's corpse and told him to substitute it for the missing body. He obediently did so, and all returned to normal!

[73] The fact that the plowman suffers a loss because of his liaison with the widow has led Adrados (1999) 624–625, to maintain that the story as preserved in the *Aesop Romance* has been "expurgated" or "moralized". One can indeed see in the story an inherent moralistic *caveat*, but to accept that the Aesopic version of the story has been moralized requires the identification of an earlier version, closer to its presumed pristine original, wherein this moralistic *caveat* did not exist. However, such a text has not been cited. Although not all Aesopic stories and fables originally expressed a moralistic outlook, many of them admittedly did.

[74] Here the logic of the narrative leaves something to be desired. The lover was not the only guard, and we are not told that the other guards were also distracted by other pursuits so as to leave the corpses unattended and ultimately allow one of them to be stolen. This weakness in the cohesion of the narrative is a clear indication that this is not the original form of the story. It is commonly accepted that in the original form of a folk narrative, the logic of the narrative is intact. See also above, note 71.

What is the point of the story? The heading to the fable reads: *Quanta sit inconstantia et libido mulierum.* The story itself, however, is even more damning for the woman. She is portrayed in dark colors, for unlike the woman in the Greek tale, her hypocrisy and cynicism are very pronounced and provoking.

In Petronius the tale has grown and developed into a novella rather than a mere Aesopic story. It is by far the longest version, much longer than Phaedrus' and several times longer than that in the *Aesop Romance.* It is now localized in Ephesos. In that town lived a married woman of such celebrated virtue that women from neighboring states came simply to gaze at her in admiration. When her husband died, she was overwhelmed by grief. During the funeral procession, she displayed her grief to everybody by beating her bared breast in front of the crowd and suchlike. Furthermore, she had the corpse placed in an underground vault, and, accompanied by a devoted maidservant, she moved into the vault and remained there day and night. Consumed in weeping, she abstained from food, courting death by starvation. Nobody could make her leave or eat. As in Phaedrus, some criminals were crucified nearby, but in Petronius only one soldier was charged with guarding the bodies. There follows relatively lengthy praise of her fidelity to her husband, her chastity, her manifold display of grief during the funeral procession, and her refusal to eat anything for five days. Nevertheless, that soldier managed to approach her and appraised her situation. After some time, and with the aid of the maidservant, he bent the widow's resistance to food, and then her resistance to sex. Thus, they passed their nights pleasurably in the [relatively spacious] vault. One day, however, the soldier discovered that one of the corpses had disappeared from its cross and in his despair wanted to kill himself. The woman, unwilling to become a virtual widow again and preferring *mortuum impendere quam vivum occidere*, as in Phaedrus, offers her husband's body to be placed on the cross, and thus to free the soldier from danger. Unlike Phaedrus, however, the common people in Petronius' narrative were not fooled, because they recognized the dead husband. Thus, the narrative ends with a sarcastic remark: *posteroque die populus miratus est, qua ratione mortuus isset in crucem.*[75] We are now a long way from the brevity and simplicity of the Greek version.

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[75] "The people wondered the next day by what means the dead man ascended the cross", in Heseltine's (1951) translation.

From the foregoing, several differences of various kinds emerge between the Greek and the Roman versions, some of them sufficiently important to cause a shift in the point of the tale. In the Greek version we have an amusing, risqué story, in which lust overpowers grief with the help of male hypocrisy; no comments are made on feminine shortcomings. The seducer pays a heavy and immediate price for his deed (irrevocable loss of his precious oxen). In the Roman versions, however, great emphasis is placed not only on the woman's grief and devotion to the memory of her deceased husband, but also on her display of chastity in widowhood. Moreover, the seducer, thanks to the cynicism and the cunning of the widow pays no penalty. We learn this, however, after a touch of suspense, at the end of the narrative. Another difference from the Greek is that in place of a plowman, the prospective lover in the Roman accounts is a soldier with a duty to perform—guarding the bodies of crucified criminals. Thus, the stakes are higher, should something go amiss. A secondary character, a maidservant, is injected, who has only a minor role in Phaedrus but an important one in Petronius, for she is the one that convinces the widow to break her abstinence from food and drink and to embrace life instead of seeking death. Thus, the way was paved for seduction by the suitor. In Phaedrus the body of the dead husband is not buried in a plain tomb, but *in sepulchro*, which in Petronius becomes something more elaborate, a vault. In both Roman writers the widow is no ordinary woman, but a remarkable beauty, who (in Petronius), as we have seen, made a great show of her grief during the burial procession. These changes contribute to a portrayal of the widow not as naive or merely libidinous, but as hypocritical and cynical. Love or loving devotion have no place here, except as objects of satire.

The same satirical approach is evident in almost all the stories examined thus far, and one may wonder whether a story of true love could have a place in the milieu that the *Aesop Romance* portrays. In that regard, we need to see how the leading characters, male and female, are portrayed in the text. It does not require great perception to realize that in the ribald stories we have discussed the victims are women.[76] In two of the stories (386 and 388 Perry) the female actors share the unflattering trait of gullibility. This negative portrayal of the women fits

[76] Whether the widow of Ephesos should be considered a victim is, at least, debatable.

very well the misogyny that permeates most of the narrative.[77] Negative comments about women match negative portrayals of the female actors. Without undertaking an exhaustive enumeration, it is enough to recall here the behavior of Xanthos' wife,[78] the behavior of her maids (Chapters 29–30), and the infidelity of the king's concubine (Chapter 103). Sharply negative remarks on women's nature are also included in the text.[79] Even Xanthos, despite his infatuation with his wife, taught his students μὴ πείθεσθαι γυναικί (see above, p. 54). The man who practiced bestiality and then deflowered the naive girl had the audacity to say οὐδὲν ἀχαριστότερον γυναικός ("nothing is more thankless than a woman"). In his tirade against Xanthos' wife (Chapter 32), Aesop himself includes four stinging Euripidean verses against women.[80] In Chapters 47 and 49–50 Aesop demonstrates to Xanthos that their bitch is more strongly attached to him than his wife. At the end of the same chapter, Aesop, makes the sarcastic remark, μέγα πρᾶγμα, εἰ γύναιον καταπλήξει ἐπράϋνα,[81] (*Perriana* 32.47.14). Finally in Chapter 109, when, in his concern for his welfare, Aesop recites a string of moral or practical precepts for the edification of his adopted son,[82] he does not forget to include some blasts against women,[83] which reflect similar sayings

[77] On misogyny in fable literature generally, see Adrados (1999) 623–625.

[78] See, e.g., how negatively La Penna (1962) 310 paints her character: "vanitosa, sensuale, impudente" with "libidine bestiale".

[79] More precisely, this is true in the part of the text where Aesop meets Xanthos and becomes his slave and inseparable companion. A touch of it is also found in Aesop's homily to his son (Chapter 109). In the rest of the main narrative women play no role, with the exception of some fables embedded in the text.

[80] δεινὴ μὲν ὀργὴ κυμάτων θαλασσίων,/ δειναὶ δὲ ποταμοῦ καὶ πυρός ⟨θερμοῦ⟩ πνοαί,/ δεινὴ δὲ πενία, δεινὰ δ' ἄλλα μυρία,/ πλὴν οὐδὲν οὕτω δεινὸν ὡς γυνὴ κακόν (*Perriana* 32.47.3–6 ~ Eur. fr. 1059, 1–4). The verses are also found in the corresponding Chapter of the other version (32.87.7–10) with some variant readings insignificant for our purposes.

[81] "A great accomplishment to have tamed a woman by overawing her".

[82] For a quick briefing on the problems in the tradition of Aesop's *adhortatio* to his son, see Perry (1952) 69 n. 556.

[83] See *Perriana* 109.69.8–10: τῇ γυναικί σου χρηστὰ ὁμίλει, ὅπως ἀνδρὸς ἄλλου πεῖραν μὴ θέλῃ λαβεῖν· κοῦφον γὰρ τὸ γένος τοῦτό ἐστιν καὶ κολακευόμενον ἐλάττονα φρονεῖ ἁμαρτάνειν ("Let your relationship with your wife be worthy so that she may not wish to have experience of another man, for womankind is a vain thing and less likely to go astray when flattered"). *Ibid.*109.69.16–18: τῇ γυναικί σου κρύπτου καὶ ἀπορρήτων μηδὲν αὐτῇ δῆλον τίθει· τὸ γὰρ γένος ἀντίπαλον ὂν πρὸς τὴν συμβίωσιν ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν καθημένη ὁπλίζεται, μηχανωμένη πῶς σου κυριεύσει ("Keep your councils from your wife, and reveal no secret to her, for womankind is a rival in married life, and she will sit all day plotting and scheming"). This is not the occasion to discuss the provenance

in other ancient authors.[84] Finally, it is tempting to add to the evidence an episode that indirectly shows indifference, at the very least, to injustices and abuses committed against women. When Xanthos has a big fire built, pretending that he is about to immolate his wife upon it (Chapters 63–64 in both versions), his guest—an ἀπερίεργος[85] rustic that Aesop had brought to the house—instead of trying to dissuade his host, asks him to wait a while so that he could run to the fields and bring his wife along, in order to burn her along with Xanthos' wife. The guest's proposal and calm reaction not only escape reprimand, but on the contrary earn him the philosopher's express admiration![86]

We have mentioned earlier of the misogynic spirit that permeates most of the work (above, pp. 70–71) and other scholars have made similar statements.[87] We know, however, that viewing women through the eyes of comedy and satire does not necessarily inform us objectively on their role and position in ancient society. It can give us hints and perhaps insights but not a well-rounded, objective assessment. In view of the above considerations, it is reasonable to wonder how seriously these attacks on women were meant to be taken.

As far as the *Aesop Romance* is concerned, we can only point out that men do not fare much better, if at all. Xanthos, the philosopher, has

of the prescriptive homily in which these statements are made, since the ones quoted are in harmony with the spirit of the text.

[84] From the multitude of sayings against women in other ancient authors we cite here some that are more or less in the same vein as those in the preceding note. *Comparatio Menandri et Philistionis* III, 12 (Jaekel) Γνώμην πονηρὰν τῇ γυναικὶ μὴ δίδου· / ἐλαφρὸν γένος γάρ ἐστι καὶ λίαν κακόν. Menander, *Sententiae* 501 (Jaekel): Μηδὲν ἀνακοινοῦ τῇ γυναικὶ χρήσιμον. Euripides, *IT* 1298: ὁρᾷτ', ἄπιστον ὡς γυναικεῖον γένος. Homer, *Od.* XI, 441–443: τῷ νῦν μή ποτε καὶ σὺ γυναικί περ ἤπιος εἶναι·/ μηδ' οἱ μῦθον ἅπαντα πιφαυσκέμεν, ὅν κ' ἐῢ εἰδῇς,/ ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν φάσθαι, τὸ δὲ κεκρυμμένον εἶναι. The rhetorical delirium in a passage of Secundus Taciturnus perhaps represents the peak of misogyny, written as a response to the question, Τί ἐστι γυνή; Ἀνδρὸς ἐπιθυμία, συνεστιώμενον θηρίον, συνεγειρομένη μέριμνα, συμπλεκομένη ἀσέλγεια, συγκοιμωμένη λέαινα, ἱματισμένη ὄχιδνα, αὐθαίρετος μάχη, συγκοιμωμένη ἀκρασία, καθημερινὴ ζημία, οἰκίας χειμών, ἀμεριμνίας ἐμπόδιον, ἀνδρὸς ἀκρατοῦς ναυάγιον, μοιχῶν κατασκευή, βίου ἅλωσις, πολυτελὴς πόλεμος, ζῷον πονηρόν, ἱκανὸν φορτίον, ἐννεαπνεύμων ζάλη, ἰοβόλος ἀσπίς, ἀνθρωποποιὸν ὑπούργημα, ἀναγκαῖον κακόν. The text along with an English translation are found in Perry (1964) 84–85.

[85] A man totally disinterested in the affairs of others, the opposite of a busybody.

[86] No wife was immolated, of course. The *ἀπερίεργος* guest had guessed that Xanthos was testing him and cleverly played along. Nevertheless, this episode would not have been appropriate or acceptable in a climate of philogyny. Cf. also Adrados (1999) 680–681.

[87] See, e.g., Adrados (1999) 680–681; Hägg (1997) 189, speaks of "blatant misogyny".

many weaknesses and character defects, of which it suffices to mention just a few. He is both inane and pompous, while the philosophical questions that concern him are absurd and insubstantial or rather comic caricatures of philosophical inquiries.[88] At a dinner-party (Chapter 68), he drinks too much and in his drunken stupor displays extreme levity and risks his entire property on a bet that he would have obviously lost, had not Aesop helped him to extricate himself. He is not fair in his dealings with Aesop; he often tries—and even conspires with his wife—to trap him and thus have an excuse for punishing him. Besides, not only does he fail to honor his promise to set Aesop free (Chapters 78–80), but on the contrary has the slave tied up (see also *Perriana* 83.61.22–24) and locked up until he is forced once more to seek Aesop's help because of his superior intellect and wisdom. Whenever truly philosophical problems are addressed to Xanthos, he is evasive and unable to tackle them, despite his professed learning (see, e.g., Chapters 35–37, esp. in the *Westermanniana*). His students—all male—are rather a silly lot, uncritical persons who wallow in Xanthos' inane pronouncements (see, e.g., Chapter 23, esp. in the *Perriana*), and even less intelligent than their pompous professor. Some of Aesop's fellow-slaves and Zenas, (overseer in the fields and a slave himself), are portrayed as unscrupulous and malicious liars; see, for example, the malicious fabrication against Aesop in Chapters 2–3 (the story about the figs). Also, the treatment that Aesop and his fellow-slaves suffer at the hands of the overseer, Zenas, is unfair and cruel. Especially noteworthy is the ease with which the same overseer calumniates Aesop (chs. 9–13). These are unmistakable instances of negative portrayal, as is the account of how Aesop was repaid by his adopted son for his kindness (Chapter 104). Besides, what is one to think about the criminal behavior of the people of Delphi? About the incestuous father in Chapter 141? And how is one to judge Aesop himself, the person who tried hard to gain his manumission, bemoaned his condition in slavery and defended his fellow-slaves (see Chapter 13), when one reads that having become a free man the former slave became himself the master of a slave (Chapter 127 in both versions)?[89] Furthermore, how commendable and in keeping with his

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[88] See, e.g., *Perriana* 67.56.35–36 and the corresponding Chapter in the *Westermanniana*; more examples in Goins (1989) 28–30; cf. also Hägg (1997) 195.

[89] Slavery was, of course, a generally accepted institution with few detractors. This institution is in a way subverted by Aesop in our text, as I have argued elsewhere (Papademetriou [1989] 19–20).

earlier ideas and behavior are his comments at the end of Chapter 140, where he tells the Delphians to their faces, "I am annoyed to die not at the hands of reputable men but of *miserable slaves*"?[90]

It seems fair to say, then, that most characters in the *Aesop Romance*, both male and female, are cast in a generally negative mould. Why is this outlook prevalent in our text? Concerning the portrayal of men and women, literary conventions embedded in comical and satirical literature dominate the narrative. Yet, human beings and their characters are not the exclusive butts of the author's satire. Philosophy[91] and some institutions are also ridiculed or caricatured.[92] An outstanding instance of this kind is found in Chapter 65, where Aesop happens to come across a high-ranking public official (the *στρατηγός*) and makes a fool of him by proving him to be an unthinking person. This is what humankind, its institutions and endeavors may look like when seen from a satirical viewpoint. This outlook is neither original nor too provocative or subversive, because it already had firmly established literary precedents as early as Old Comedy. It was also reflected in many anecdotes and mimes. This long and widely accepted tradition allowed all sorts of liberties such as the use of obscene vocabulary and manifold kinds of satire.

The attitudes reflected in the *Aesop Romance*, the modes of behavior approved or disapproved and the values that a trained reader's eyes can discern should not be taken more seriously than similar ideas and comments occurring in ancient Comedy and other popular, entertaining texts. In any case, in this satirical, playful, and misogynic or, better, misanthropic milieu, in which crude sex performed by uninhibited, lustful men and women thrives, a story of true, lasting love of the kind found in the canonical novels would be out of place.

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[90] *Perriana* 140.77.1–2, δυσφόρως ἔχω, ὅτι οὐχ ὑπὸ ἀξιολόγων ἀνδρῶν ἀλλ' ὑπὸ καταπτύστων δουλαρίων ἀπόλλυμαι. Aesop makes similar comments in the corresponding passage of the other version (140.107.15–16). There are other instances, too, where Aesop's behavior can be reproached; see Merkle (1996) 231; 216 n. 20.

[91] Philosophy and especially philosophers were already, of course, targets of satire in Old Comedy.

[92] This remark is applicable roughly to the sections of the narrative until Aesop's manumission and also the last one, in which Aesop's visit to Delphi is related.

Appendix[93]

In this section we shall attempt a preliminary examination of the survival of the widow of Ephesos story in a Byzantine/post-Byzantine poem, which seems to have passed unnoticed by Classical scholars.[94]

The tale about the widow is incorporated in a long metrical work, entitled *Συναξάριον τῶν εὐγενικῶν γυναικῶν καὶ εὐγενεστάτων ἀρχοντισσῶν*,[95] which was composed in demotic Greek by an unknown person at the beginning of the sixteenth century.[96] Our story is reported in lines 377–418; they are the topic of a paper by G. Spadaro,[97] who printed the verses together with his Italian translation.[98] The story opens with a direct mention of Aesop and the information that the story is set in Athens (verses 377–378): λέει κι' ὁ Αἴσωπος διὰ μιὰ γυναίκα εἰς τὴν Ἀθήναν/ ποὺ ἐπέθανεν ὁ ἄντρας της κ' ἔκλαιεν τον ἕνα μήναν ("Aesop relates [the story] of a woman in Athens, whose husband died, and she kept crying for him for one month"). The story concludes with another reference to Aesop in the closing line 418: ἐτέλειωσες, διδάσκαλε, Αἴσωπε τιμημένε ("you have finished, master [teacher], honored Aesop"). Despite the fact that Aesop is explicitly mentioned twice and in prominent positions in the poem (beginning and end), the contents of the story do not evoke the Aesopic text, but rather the versions in the Roman writers.[99]

To defend this view, it is first necessary to summarize the narrative of the poem. Following her husband's death, the widow stands by his grave mourning day and night for a whole month (verses 377–379). A few days later (exactly how many is not specified), a robber who had murdered children and their mothers[100] is crucified (or "hanged"; the

93 Hereafter all translations are mine.

94 I have worded this remark cautiously, because I cannot claim to have located and checked the entire literature on the subject. See also above, p. 67.

95 First published in Krumbacher (1905). He was the first to call it a *Weiberspiegel*, a term subsequently adopted by many other scholars.

96 See Beck (1971) 193 n. 1 for a select bibliography and 194 for other editions of the text. Further bibliography is cited in Spadaro (1972).

97 See Spadaro (1972).

98 This is the Greek text that we have used and refer to.

99 Noted already by Spadaro (1972) 457.

100 Several verses later (verse 401) the poet calls the criminal merely a "thief" (*κλέπτη*). Why the inconsistency? Conflation of sources or inability of the poet to resist an easy rhyme with the preceding verse, which ends with the rhyming Modern Greek word *ἐπομπεύτη*?

Greek word allows both translations) on a "furka"[101] (verse 412), which is placed near the grave, and a guard is posted there. One night, the guard is thirsty; he goes over to the grave and bemoaning his miserable situation asks the widow for water, which she herself duly gives him (the maidservant of the Roman versions has no part here). Once the guard has quenched his thirst, he starts urging her not to die on account of the loss of her husband and to have pleasure with him instead. Immediately and with no pretense of falling in love, the widow stops her lament and without wasting a moment starts having intercourse with the guard. In the meantime, somebody took away the unguarded corpse of the criminal (verse 412). As soon as the guard realizes what has happened, he wishes that he were dead. Losing no time, however, the cunning widow suggests that he put the decaying corpse of her husband on the "furka" and she actually helps him in executing this macabre task. A couple of lines before the end, the poet exclaims (verse 416), λοιπὸν ϑωρεῖτε, ἄνϑρωποι, τῆς γυναικὸς τὴν φύσιν ("well, people, look at the nature of womankind").

The similarities of the narrative to the Roman versions are numerous and so manifest that it would be superfluous to list them all here. The story is immediately localized as in Petronius (Athens in place of Ephesos). The widow's mourning of her deceased husband, a situation of private grief, is set side by side with a public, sensational and more gruesome event, the crucifixion of a despicable criminal who had committed heinous crimes ("murdered children and their mothers", verse 381). Thus, instead of the simple, peaceful setting of the Aesopic version (a farmer plowing a field), we have guards keeping watch over the bodies of the crucified criminals. As in Phaedrus, initially it is thirst that makes the guard approach the widow. In both Roman versions, the corpse of a crucified criminal is stealthily stolen, while in the Aesopic version no such thing happens. The gruesome component, which appears only in the Roman versions, finds its counterpart in the "Byzantine" text, too: the substitution of the stolen corpse with the deceased husband's decomposing body. Finally, the strongly misogynic view of women that characterizes the narrative in the Roman authors also finds its counterpart in our poem (verses 413–417).

In conclusion, we are unable to identify the immediate source of the poem in any of the ancient versions that we have discussed. It is

[101] A contraption similar to a gallows, as shown by verse 412; see discussion of the word in Spadaro (1972) 455.

also hard, given the intellectual milieu of his times, to imagine that the poet was of sufficient learning to have the required knowledge of Latin and its literature. In addition, he would have needed access to all three ancient versions of the tale, in order to read and then conflate them. It is more likely, as Spadaro has argued, that an intermediary source was involved (*op. cit.*, pp. 461–463). Could this have been the version in Romulus,[102] the best known of the prose adapters of Phaedrus? The story of the widow is, indeed, included among Romulus' fables (number 59) in a form rather faithful to its source, although it is much shorter than Phaedrus' version. Moreover, it does not divert from Phaedrus' text in ways that could make it an intermediary form or link between the ancient version and the poem we have discussed. It remains to search for the intermediary source(s) in other medieval and mostly "vulgar" Italian adaptations of Aesopic materials. I hope that some younger scholar will step forward to wade through the rich material listed in Spadaro's study and in other works if deemed necessary[103] until, it is hoped, a definitive answer is found.

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[102] For the text of Romulus, see Thiele (1910). See also his discussion of the Widow story (including a comparison of the versions in the three Roman authors on pp. 361–368) in Thiele (1908).

[103] Such as, e.g., the texts mentioned in Filosa (1952).

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE IDEAL GREEK NOVEL FROM A BIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Tomas Hägg

In this paper I shall view the ideal Greek novels—or "the canon" as some now prefer to say—from the viewpoint of some ancient biographical texts. My intention is to let the characteristics of the canon emerge in comparison with works of the so-called "fringe", rather than the other way round, as has been more usual. No great revelations should be expected from the application of such a perspective. Yet I hope at least to be able to draw the contours of the genre with somewhat clearer lines and give added emphasis to some of its well-known features. Most of these will of course come out through contrast, but some also by similarity. As to be expected, neither group of texts is homogeneous. The texts chosen for comparison are five works sometimes described as biographical "romances" (or "novels"): Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, the *Life of Alexander* (or *Alexander Romance*) ascribed to Callisthenes (Recension *A*), the anonymous *Life of Aesop* (or *Aesop Romance*, Recension *G*), the Pseudo-Herodotean *Life of Homer*, and Philostratus' *Apollonius of Tyana*.[1] They have all enough in common with the ideal novels to make a comparison of various aspects of structure and attitude meaningful.

Love and marriage

The most conspicuous difference between the two groups of texts is the role given to the topic of love. The treatment of love in the biographical romances—as far as the biographical subject himself is concerned—is remarkably summary, as well as remarkably similar among several of them. In the *Cyropaedia*, the marriage of Cyrus to his nameless cousin is

[1] I have used the following editions: *Institutio Cyri* ed. E.C. Marchant (1910), *Historia Alexandri Magni* ed. W. Kroll (1926), *Romanzo di Esopo* ed. F. Ferrari (1997), *Lives of Homer* ed. M.L. West (2003), *Apollonius of Tyana* ed. C.P. Jones (2005).

described as a purely political arrangement. Just one personal touch is added. When the girl's father, King Cyaxares of Media, presents her to his nephew, he alludes to Cyrus' sojourn as a young boy at the Median court: "This is she whom you often looked after (ἐτιθηνήσω) when you stayed with us as a boy. And whenever anyone asked her whom she would marry, she used to say, 'Cyrus!'" (8.5.19). Not a word is spent on Cyrus' own feelings towards the girl, either as a boy or now as her bridegroom, nor is their relationship as man and wife ever thematized. The queen is not even present in the elaborate death scene, when the king addresses his sons (8.7.5), a fact that does not even merit a comment from the narrator. Likewise, Alexander in the *Romance* is presented with a wife: on his deathbed, King Darius gives him his daughter Roxane (2.20.11). She never really assumes flesh and blood in the story, until a very short but touching appearance, close to the end, in Recension A (3.32.5–7). When the poisoned Alexander secretly leaves the house, apparently to commit suicide, she follows him in the dark, embraces him, and prevents the act. Nothing is revealed at any point about Alexander's own possible feelings of love or affection. Homer's family life, in the biography styled *à la* Herodotus, is mentioned only once: on Chios, when the travelling rhapsode and teacher is sufficiently established at last, "he married a woman (γυναῖκα ἔγημεν), from whom two daughters were born to him; one of them died unwed, the other he married off to a Chian" (25). That is all, "a woman"! The wives of Cyrus, Alexander, and Homer are thus treated as pure staffage in the respective Lives. Aesop, in turn, is not even married, nor described as emotionally involved with any woman, though on one occasion he has sex with his master's wife (75–76); and Apollonius of Tyana totally renounces both sex and marriage (1.13.3).

Thus, no protagonist of our five biographical romances ever gets involved in anything "romantic". If the hero is married at all, the author is anxious to present the event in as businesslike terms as possible. Marriage only serves political purposes and procreation, emotions play no part. This is all the more remarkable when we consider how prominent a part love and sex play in two of the Lives—with regard to actors other than the hero. The *Life of Alexander* begins with the fantastic story about ex-Pharaoh Nectanebo seducing Queen Olympias of Macedon and fathering the future Alexander, told in great detail and with a strain of farcical humour. Nectanebo is not just showing off his magical powers, he is actually filled with erotic desire, finding the queen more beautiful than the moon (Recension A, 1.4.1); and

when Nectanebo is dead, Olympias (in Recension β, 1.14) feels affection (στοργή) for him. The *Cyropaedia* famously includes as a subplot, distributed over several books (from 5.1.2 to 7.3.16), the sentimental and tragic love story of the beautiful Panthea and her husband Abradates. That story is often mentioned as a source of inspiration for the ideal novels. Why, then, does Xenophon reserve love and sentiment for a subplot and keep his real hero free from emotions of that kind (thus postponing "the birth of the ideal novel" for some hundred years ...)? And why is he followed in this insistance on heroic asceticism by the other writers of fictitious biography?

It need hardly be said that neither concern for historical veracity nor the lack of sources can reasonably be adduced as an explanation for the anonymous existence of the wives. All three Lives liberally introduce freely invented characters. Cyaxares, Cyrus' maternal uncle and father-in-law, is himself a creation of Xenophon's imagination who is given a prominent role and a distinctive character in the story. Homer could easily have been given, for instance, a charming Nausicaa as his wife, as he gets a Phemius as his teacher—and is given as parents, in another contemporary biography, no less personages than Odysseus' son Telemachus and Nestor's daughter Polycaste (*Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 3)! Alexander's case is even more significant: Pseudo-Callisthenes has amalgamated Alexander's two historical wives, the Bactrian girl Roxane and Darius' daughter Stateira, into one. Thereby he gives the marriage a dynastic, unromantic motivation and deprives Roxane of Alexander's love which the rest of the biographical tradition in fact grants her. Plutarch reports that Alexander's "marriage to Roxane was a love match (τὰ περὶ 'Ροξάνην ἔρωτι ... ἐπράχθη), which began when he first saw her in the height of her youthful beauty taking part in a dance at a banquet"; and Arrian and Curtius Rufus each embroiders the motif with further details.[2]

Why, then, are Cyrus and the others represented as immune to love? We may find a kind of answer in the passage of the *Cyropaedia* where the Panthea story intersects with Cyrus' own story. When Panthea is allotted to Cyrus as a prize of war, he refuses even to have a look at her, lest her exceptional beauty will make him "sit gazing at her, neglecting what I have to do" (5.1.8). He sends a young friend, Araspas, to be her guard and warns him in advance of the power of love. Araspas answers

[2] Plut. *Alex*. 47.4, trans. Scott-Kilvert (1973). Arr. *Anab*. 4.19.5; Curt. 8.4.23–26. Cf. Liviabella Furiani (2001) 251 f.

that only weaklings (μοχθηροί) succumb to love in this fashion (5.1.13); of course he soon falls hopelessly in love with the prisoner himself. The dialogue on love between the two (5.1.8–17) shows Cyrus not to be asexual after all—it is his deep sense of duty that inhibits him from romantic affairs. As James Tatum puts it, "For Cyrus, the fairest woman in all of Asia is a momentary intrusion of the destabilizing power of Eros in the tightly controlled world of his evolving empire".[3]

Is it then their sense of duty, their sheer professionalism, that hinders Cyrus and Alexander as leaders, Homer and Aesop as poets, Apollonius as a philosophical missionary, from diverting their attention to private love? Is this what the other biographers too are implying, without spelling it out as the always conscientious Xenophon does? There is no denying that these heroes are all characterized as rather single-minded: Alexander the conqueror, Homer the aspiring poet, Aesop the witty trickster and teller of truth, Apollonius the professed ascetic and reformer. They all have a cause, and the stories might have risked becoming less powerful if love had been allowed to interfere with this cause. If so, what does that tell us about the ideal novel? First, of course, that none of the heroes of the novels has any vocation of any kind from which their attention might be diverted by "the destabilizing power of Eros". They are in their very essence private (ἰδιῶται as they would have been defined in an earlier period) and may apparently spend all their time, their whole lives, loving—or deploring lost love. Incidentally, this must be one of the reasons why these novels may seem so one-dimensional and strangely abstract in comparison with modern novels—not to mention real life—in which the conflict between different interests often makes falling in love create an internal conflict. In the ideal novel, the obstacles and destructive factors are mostly external and accidental. The love motif is pure, isolated, and its representation risks becoming accordingly monotonous.

This one-dimensional quality is most conspicuous in the male protagonists. In a Xenophontean society, it is they who would have been expected to have some profession or outer obligation that made love a problem. Instead, it is some of the *heroines* that experience a conflict of duties. Callirhoe has her proud paternal heritage to consider and then, more acutely, her duty to her unborn child—this makes her monologues more substantial and lifelike than many others. Charicleia has

[3] Tatum (1989) 168.

a direction in her wanderings; as the reader knows, she is the heir to the Meroitic throne. The heroes, on the other hand, are only driven by their love. They are the "weaklings", the μοχθηροί, of whom Xenophon lets Araspas speak. The novelists have not succeeded in making them truly "round" characters, they are (famously) pale and passive, no doubt because lacking the ancient attributes of masculinity. When a Chaereas suddenly turns a war hero, this is intrinsicly unrealistic; his urge for leadership comes abruptly, and his success is undeserved. This new kind of hero has not, like Cyrus and Alexander, devoted his teens to the appropriate male *paideia*.

The great invention of the Greek novelists, to give private individuals the leading role and make their mutual love the driving force of a book-length prose narrative, has its converse in this absence of a social context that would make love an organic part of life. Our biographers chose to eliminate love, the novelists to isolate it.

Where have all the brothers gone?

Biography (of all kinds and periods) is naturally interested in family: parents, brothers and sisters, children. The five biographical romances we are studying are not all of them quite typical in this respect. Aesop the slave completely lacks family. His *Life* begins when his professional career as a farm-slave begins, and he dies childless (after an adopted son has betrayed him and then committed suicide). Cyrus' parents have crucial roles in his *paideia*, as have his maternal grandfather and (to a less extent) his uncle; but no brothers or sisters are mentioned, and his own two sons do not appear physically in the narrative until instructed by their father on his deathbed (8.7.5). Nor does the Alexander of the *Romance* have any brothers or sisters alive;[4] his most intimate family relation, both in childhood and manhood, is with his mother Olympias, to whom, in subsequent recensions, he even addresses what has been described as "love letters".[5] His attitude to his two fathers, Nectanebo the biological and Philip the official one, is ambiguous, to say the least. He happens to kill Nectanebo but (in Recension A) feels no remorse,

[4] Though he is named after a dead half-brother: his father Philip says in 1.13.1 that he calls him Alexander "in memory of my son by my previous wife who died".

[5] See Jouanno (1995), who on p. 227 speaks of Alexander's "lettres-gages d'affection" or even "lettres d'amour".

just a pang of affection (στοργή), after the dying man has revealed his fatherhood (1.14.10). Alexander's most family-minded act is his caring and successful effort to reconcile his father and mother after Philip has betrayed Olympias by taking young Cleopatra as his second wife (1.22); and Alexander takes proper filial vengeance upon his father's murderer (1.24). The pseudo-Herodotean Homer is the illegitimate child of an unknown father and grows up with his mother, who apparently has no other children. His step-father Phemius, a schoolteacher, is instrumental in his education (4–5). Homer has two daughters with his anonymous wife (25), but they have no role to play in the action, not even at his death.

It is only in *Apollonius of Tyana* that the action includes a brother of the hero. Apollonius is born, just as Homer, when his mother finds herself in the countryside away from home (1.5); but, unlike Homer, he is a legitimate child, the son of a wealthy citizen of Tyana (though some say he is Zeus' son [1.6], like Homer in some versions was the son of the river-god Meles [*Certamen*, 1.2 etc.]). His father arranges for a proper education in rhetoric and philosophy (1.7), but plays no further role in the narrative; and his mother is completely absent, except for the picturesque birth scene. The brother makes his appearance when their mother and father have died, and it is time to divide their inheritance. The hitherto unmentioned brother, who has lived a life in debauchery and promiscuity, is then twenty-two, Apollonius twenty, and Philostratus relates how Apollonius with his social intelligence, tactfulness, and generosity succeeds in reforming his elder brother (1.13). But the good terms now established between them are not further exploited, and the anonymous brother disappears from the story. Since Apollonius is named after his father (1.4) and calls himself "son of Apollonius" (1.6), it is obvious that an elder brother was no part of the author's plan, until temporarily needed in 1.13 as a foil to the virtuous hero. Nevertheless, this *Life* at least exhibits pieces of a complete family setting.

The ideal novels generally start at the moment when the young couple is destined to meet and fall in love. Of the five, only Heliodorus thematizes the conception and birth of his heroine in a manner similar to the Lives of Alexander, Homer, and Apollonius, even though he does so just in a retrospect to explain the heroine's white skin (4.8). Only Longus follows his hero and heroine from infancy through childhood; upbringing is no topic in the others. (*Parthenope*, extant only in fragments, seems to have been an exception to the rule: apparently, it started with the wedding of the heroine's parents and went on to

describe her conception as well as birth and manly education).[6] Yet parents (or foster-parents) play an important role in the introductory parts of all except Heliodorus, though in different orchestration. It will suffice to mention their various efforts to influence the further development of the love affair: in Chariton, Hermocrates' politically motivated resistance to a marriage, in Xenophon, all four parents' pious investigations about their children's "illness", in Achilles Tatius, the appearance of Leucippe's mother in her daughter's bedroom when Clitophon has just visited her bed. By the nature of things, the parents remain in the background in the travel-and-separation parts of the novels, though regularly remembered in monologues; but they return to the scene of action to supervise the happy ending. An exception to this rule is Xenophon who, in accordance with his urge for parallelism, lets both parent couples die "from old age and despair" in the meantime (5.15.3). Longus is again special: his hero and heroine, who have grown up as foundlings, receive brand new families for the grand finale, their true mothers and fathers—and Daphnis even a brother, Astylus (4.22–24). New and old families celebrate together the happy outcome.

This Astylus, if I am not mistaken, is the only brother of a hero or heroine to appear, or even be mentioned, in any of the five ideal novels; and his role is not that of a brother, until this blood relationship is revealed in the final anagnorisis. Sisters are also absent, if we leave out of account Clitophon's half-sister Calligone, who likewise has another function than that of a sister: she is the bride intended for Clitophon by their common father (1.3.2). Chaereas too has a sister, it is true, who suddenly appears at the very end of the novel (8.8.12–13) when his companion Polycharmus gets her as his bride in reward for his loyalty; as the early-nineteenth-century German translator C. Schmieder noted, she "springs up like a mushroom from the earth" for this very purpose.[7]

While the rest of the family pattern is largely unremarkable, the absence of brothers and sisters deserves some attention. As we have seen, this hardly constitutes any contrast to the biographical romances: only Apollonius of the five heroes has a brother, and this brother is present in one episode only. But Greek myth, epic, and tragedy feature couples of brothers and sisters prominently. We need only think of

[6] See Hägg, Utas (2003) 215–219.
[7] Schmieder (1807) VII f.

Helen and Clytemnestra (and the Dioscuri), Agamemnon and Menelaus, Hector and Paris, Orestes, Electra and Iphigeneia, Antigone and Ismene, and so on. (New Comedy, however, seems also to favour the only child.) Historically as well, few families will have raised only one child. It is true that large families with several sons and daughters who have survived infancy (infirmity, infanticide) seem to be rare in all periods of Greek antiquity. Themistocles' five sons and (at least) four daughters (according to Plutarch)[8] were surely an exception, while perhaps Socrates with three sons and Isocrates with two brothers and one sister are more representative.[9] Sarah Pomeroy quotes with approval Thomas Gallant's estimate that the average Greek family will have raised two sons and one daughter, this proportion being "the best reproductive strategy, permitting a family to survive while maintaining its economic status".[10] Though no reliable statistics are available,[11] there is no obvious reason to believe that the Hellenistic and Roman periods brought fundamental changes in this respect.[12] Interestingly in our context, there is generally a close correlation between a family's wealth and the number of children raised.[13] Both in Classical Athens and among the Ptolemaic aristocracy, "[r]aising a number of daughters was indicative of great wealth and pride", says Sarah Pomeroy[14] (with regard to sons, concerns about partition of the inheritance could be a restrictive factor). The parents of our novelistic protagonists clearly belong to the category of wealthy nobility—"a leading citizen of Ephesus" etc.—who might have been expected to show off their status by raising several children.

How then are we to explain that, as a rule, the hero and heroine of these novels is an only child? Why is there no brother to take part in the search for Callirhoe across the sea, like Orestes saving his sister Iphigeneia from exile in a far-off country? Why no sister for Antheia

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[8] Plut. *Them.* 32.1–3.

[9] Lacey (1968) 164–167 notes with regard to Classical Athens: "Five children is not uncommon among families who employed the orators whose works have survived" (with details p. 307 n. 79). Others have somewhat lower estimates of normality: Humphreys (1983) 74 n. 4; Pomeroy (1984) 44f.

[10] Pomeroy (1997) 7, 139f. (quotation 139); Gallant (1991) 21.

[11] On the problem of sources, see Gallant (1991) 15–17.

[12] However, the infant survival rate, in the areas at all available for statistics, seems to have been lower in the Hellenistic period (1.6, as against 2.7 in the classical period), see Pomeroy (1997) 6f.

[13] See Rawson (1992) 194–197.

[14] Pomeroy (1984) 44.

to confide her love to, and to long for after the separation? No easy answer presents itself. But, conceivably, this may be another symptom of the narrative isolation of the love motif: no other emotional link will be allowed to disturb the unique relationship between the two lovers. Their loneliness in the world, when separated from each other, is absolute, horizontal family ties would only blur the picture of total mutual dependence and attachment. (One is necessarily reminded of *Genesis* 2.24 "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife ...", and of Socrates' ideal lover in Plato's *Phaedrus* 252a who "quite forgets mothers, brothers, friends, all together"). It may be indicative that the one Greek novelistic work that features prominently a brother and sister, Antonius Diogenes' *Incredible Things beyond Thule*, conversely (at least to judge from Photius' summary) marginalizes love and romance. The heroine, Dercyllis, is accompanied by her brother Mantinias on her travels, while her love for the hero, Deinias, and their eventual marriage seem to have been downplayed in the narrative, as are also the several other love relationships in this enigmatic work.[15] Eros and brother-sisterly *philia* appear to be uneasy companions in ancient romantic fiction.

Another lacuna in the ideal novel's family pattern, the absence of children born of the protagonists (except for Callirhoe's baby), needs no elaborate explanation. Whereas the biographies are generally two-(or-three)-generational narratives, to cover the life span of the hero from birth to death, the five novels concentrate on just one generation: from infancy to marriage in Longus and Heliodorus, a still shorter chronological span in the others. In fact, the story actually told mostly covers just a few years from puberty to marriage. (As already mentioned, *Parthenope* is an exception, apparently starting with the wedding of the heroine's parents.) This concentration in time is an obvious advantage from an artistic point of view; one needs only to think of the curious telescoping of the later parts of Cyrus' life in the *Cyropaedia*.[16] Only the short and eventful life of Alexander allows a *Life* without the impression of significant temporal gaps.

[15] Cf. the discussion in Stephens, Winkler (1995) 109–112.
[16] Cf. Due (1989) 48–51.

Time, space, and travelling

The reason for the most important difference in temporal structure between the two groups of works has just been mentioned: the biographical romances are life stories, the novels love stories. But there is more to say about the different treatment of time and space in the works under discussion, with special reference to the "travel" motif. First the biographies. In the *Cyropaedia*, there is a certain vagueness in both respects. Xenophon uses his personal knowledge of Persian habits to lend his narrative some ethnographical local colour, but is much more vague about geographical space than he was in his *Anabasis* or *Hellenica*. As Philip Stadter notes, "Cyrus' actions, whether said to be in Media, Persia, or one of the other states, always occur in a dislocated and unspecified area. … The countries do not figure as real places, simply the proper locale for specific types of action."[17] The travelling itself between countries or places has none of the concreteness of the *Anabasis*. Mostly, the movement is just stated as a fact. Time passes equally unspecified, contrary to historiographical fashion. The same applies to the greater part of the *Life of Alexander*, even if there appear occasional clusters of geographical names. Only the description of the foundation of Alexandria is topographically detailed (1.31–33), only the long travel letter to Aristotle (3.17) has specific temporal and spatial markers. When it is said, at the beginning of the third and last book, as the soldiers refuse to march any further into India, that "they had been in the field for twelve years" (3.1.4), this piece of information comes as a complete novelty. Likewise, in the *Life of Aesop*, no attempt is made to place the action in concrete surroundings. Thus Samos is just Samos without specification of topography, buildings, or nature (contrast Longus' Lesbos!). The slave transport from inland Asia Minor to Ephesus (18–19) is utilized for purposes of characterization, but that is an exception. The extensive travels undertaken by Aesop in the later part of the *Life* are not described, just stated; and time passes during and between the focal points of the narrative without specification. The *Life of Homer* has its action set in a number of different Greek cities, and some local colour is added at places; but the travelling itself, by sea or land, is again not thematized, nor is its duration generally specified. The exception to the rule is *Apollonius of Tyana*, replete as it is

[17] Stadter (1991) 478 f.

with travelling in ever changing surroundings, sightseeing, conversations about the countries traversed and peoples encountered, and with a fair number of temporal indications.

Considering that, with one exception, all the works we are discussing, of both categories, may be described as narratives of travelling—or, to be more exact, of geographically changing scenes of action—the differences in practice deserve some attention. The exception, of course, is Longus' novel, with the action confined to the island of Lesbos. In the following global comparisons between the two categories I shall leave aside *Apollonius of Tyana* as well, to return to that work at the end.

In contrast to the biographical romances, the ideal novels make the travels themselves an essential part of the narrative, a motif in its own right. First, they use them to display the emotions and thoughts of hero and heroine against a moving background. The pirate vessel with Callirhoe on board sets sail from Syracuse, passes Athens, and "on the third day" reaches a harbour eighty stadia from Miletus (Char. 1.11). The description mingles topographical and nautical information with Callirhoe's reactions and negotiations with the pirate chief Theron. Likewise, Callirhoe's forced journey by land from Miletus through Asia to the Persian court at Babylon is described at length (5.1), with the heroine's changing emotions again at the centre: "As far as Syria and Cilicia Callirhoe readily put up with the journey, for she still heard Greek spoken and could look upon the sea which led to Syracuse. But when she arrived at the River Euphrates, the starting point of the Great King's empire, beyond which lies the vast continent, then she was filled with longing for her home and family and despaired of ever returning again. So standing on the river bank . . ., she began to speak as follows: . . .".[18] There are similar instances in the other novels, making the very movement in time and space significant.

Second, many of the most dramatic events of the stories happen precisely on the road or at sea, between the cities and harbours: robber and pirate attacks, shipwrecks, attempted rape, etc. This makes the act of travelling an important narrative motif, with all its hardships, dangers, and horrors. Some voyages, it is true, are just perfunctorily registered with a bare temporal indication, especially in Xenophon of Ephesus; yet travelling charged with action and emotion is the rule. Third, now and then the travels take on the character of sightseeing, be it

[18] Trans. G.P. Goold (1995).

Habrocomes and Antheia visiting, hand in hand, the temple of Helius on Rhodes (Xen. Eph. 1.12), or Clitophon arriving in Alexandria, marvelling at the city's grandeur and beauty: "As I entered through the so-called 'Gates of the Sun', I was immediately confronted with the brilliant beauty of the city, and my eyes were filled with pleasure. Two opposing rows of columns ran in straight lines from the Gates of the Sun to the Gates of the Moon", and so on (Ach. Tat. 5.1).[19] The descriptions of Syracuse and of Miletus and its surroundings in Chariton have a concreteness to them, whatever their documentary qualities, that is absent in Aesop's Samos and Babylon and most other localities in the biographical romances. Among these, it is only *Apollonius of Tyana* that competes with, or even surpasses, the ideal novels in utilizing the travelling itself for manifold purposes. In addition to his own authorial narrative, and subtly mixed with it, Philostratus features Apollonius and his naive companion Damis in lively discussion about the geographical, ethnic, and natural peculiarities they meet on their long way to the wise men of India and Aithiopia. It is of course no coincidence that this full appropriation of the travel motif happens in a biography written at a time when the ideal novel had flourished for centuries and exerted its influence.[20]

Concluding remarks

The argument in the present paper has to a large extent been based on generalizations, concerning each group of texts, or each work separately. As we have seen, one or other of the five in each group sometimes forms an exception, as *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Apollonius of Tyana* (in opposite ways) with regard to the travel motif. Generalizations about separate works are equally risky, especially since three of the biographical romances are what David Konstan calls "open texts", with regard to both genesis and transmission.[21] These are the Lives of Aesop, Alexander, and (in a slightly different way) Homer, all created through the amalgamation of material of different origin and nature. Generalizations that are reasonably true for the Samos part of the *Life of Aesop* are

[19] Trans. Whitmarsh (2001).

[20] I shall develop this topic further in a forthcoming article, "The Sense of Travelling: Philostratus and the Novel".

[21] Konstan (1998).

thus not necessarily valid for the Babylon or Delphi parts, nor does the narrative of the long letters in the *Life of Alexander* function in the same way as that of their surroundings, and so on.

With these reservations, I believe that some of the general characteristics of the ideal novels have come out more clearly through the comparison. Their isolation of the love motif has been emphasized, an isolation achieved through the suppression of a context of citizenship for the male protagonists as well as a normal family context (brothers and sisters) for both hero and heroine. In addition, it has become evident how innovative the novelists were in fully integrating into their plot the travel motif, situating their actors in a given time-space and making the travelling itself pregnant with meaning.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE HISTORICAL NOVEL IN THE GREEK WORLD: XENOPHON'S *CYROPAEDIA*

Bernhard Zimmermann

I

There are a number of methodological difficulties one should consider when analysing historical novels in the Greek World:

1. When determining if the Greek historical novel existed, it is necessary to start first with its modern day successors, which have been produced in large numbers since the eighteenth century. Using the modern texts, the markers of the genre can be identified and used to search for the ancient predecessors of the historical novel, which is typically seen as a modern genre.[1]
2. Given the retrospective nature of this analysis, it is disputable whether this method is in fact legitimate. In my opinion it is. There are a number of literary phenomena for which considerations of genre only developed in the modern day and a term was coined. While "the novel" is a perfect example of this, another example would be the term "utopia". Nevertheless, it is indubitable that even in antiquity these phenomena existed, without (as far as one can tell) evidence for their recognition by ancient authors.
3. This question inevitably leads to the controversial discussion on the origins of the genre of the novel, an extremely difficult topic. I hope that my questions offer a solution to this problem.

[1] For the historical novel of the modern age, cf. Aust (1994).

II

The historical novel is a neglected child of literary studies and literary criticism. "Most historical novels are an abhorrence", writes Theodor Fontane in 1875 in his critical review of Gustav Freytag's novel *Die Ahnen* (1873–1881; *The Ancestors*),[2] although he himself worked in the genre with his novel *Vor dem Sturm* (*Before the Storm*). Literary criticism has always treated contemporary novels more kindly than historical novels. Historical novels (and here Fontane's opinion coincides with contemporary research on oral history) are only approved of as long as they do not date back more than 60 years. Walter Scott's *Waverley*, subtitled *Or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, was considered a template in the nineteenth century.[3] Scott and his historical and historicising novels were the inspiration for this form of the novel, which flourished in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Critical, dismissive and affirmative comments on the genre can be quoted in abundance. Literary theory and literary research had greater difficulties in accepting the genre as literature *sui generis* than the literary critiques of the *feuilleton*.

There are a number of reasons why the historical novel is problematic for scholarship. First, since Aristotle's *Poetics* (1451b 1–6), there seems to be an irreconcilable conflict between history (τὰ γενόμενα) and fiction (οἷα ἂν γένοιτο). The author of a historical novel ventures into a field which has nothing to do with literature. Here, the free spirit of fantasy must conform to the hard facts of historiography, whose aim it is to reconstruct events as they really happened. The historical novel occupies the middle ground between fiction and history, which can result in the assimilation of literature into historiography. Authors of historical novels often unintentionally invent sources,[4] they enrich their works with annotations and often furnish them with lengthy introductions. German criticism of the nineteenth century accurately described the schoolmasterly pedantry of many of the products of this genre with the uncomplimentary term "*Professorenroman*" ("*professors' novel*"). Like the Gorgian logos theory, the author of the historical novel gives the

[2] Quoted in Lindken (1977) 55.

[3] Cf. Steinecke (1987) 77f. For the perception of Scott in the German novel theory cf. Hillebrand ([3]1993) 208ff.

[4] Cf. for example the foreword to E. Plessen's novel *Kohlhaas* (1980): "Neulich erzählte mir ein Schriftsteller, der sich demnächst an einen historischen Roman machen will, daß er aus Mangel an Quellen genötigt sein werde, Quellen zu erfinden, Quellen also zu fingieren, weil es seinem Konzept so entspreche". Quoted in Steinecke/Wahrenburg (1999) 498.

impression that their work is academic, which is either real or imagined, in order to blind the audience or to lead them on the wrong track. Nevertheless, there are always signs of fictionality in the text. One is tempted to call this form of the historical novel (which is often staged in a distant past) a reconstructing, didactic novel.

The existence of hybrid genres can plausibly be argued in the case of the historical novel: it is a fictional story disguised in historiographical form, and is often supported by a biographical or autobiographical mode of narration.

Another criticism of the historical novel is that it falls victim to escapism. Instead of addressing the problems of the present day, the author deals with the good old days. It is for this reason that historical novels are often regarded as trivial. However, as many historical novels from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries illustrate, they can be politicised, and become nationalistic and ideological mediums.

Commentators often overlook the fact that the escapist form of the historical novel contains subversive criticism of the present day; especially during times of dictatorship and despotism, the historicising of the text offers protection from persecution by the regime. There is a vast number of important forgotten works from Nazi Germany, particularly works of Catholic origin (W. Berggruen, R. Schneider), which use the form of the historical novel as a medium for contemporary criticism.

III

On the basis of this retrospective approach, what are the features[5] that characterise the genre of the historical novel?

1. The title or the first pages of historical novels make clear references to history; these might be dates, names, events and cultural details which convey the temporal distance of the text from the present day of the reader and emphasise the difference between the text and the here and now.
2. Admittedly, this chronological distance and difference can be bypassed at important, climactic moments. With deliberately inserted

[5] It would probably be more appropriate to speak of the features of the special form of the historical novel than to speak of a subgroup of the genre novel.

anachronisms, the text is brought into the present time of the reader; this is a technique which English philologists describe in tragedy as the "zooming effect". The text becomes a looking glass for the present day; it might discretely pass criticism on society and act subversively. In this case, one can speak of the parabolic historical novel.

3. Authors of historical novels tend to write forewords, in which they discuss in a serious, playful or ironic manner, the difficulties in acquiring material, the archival research, etc., or, as Walter Scott and recently Elisabeth Plessen have done, they evaluate the genre often in an apologetic manner.

IV

If one considers the defining features of the modern historical novel when examining Greek fictional prose, one does not find them in the "canonical" texts (labelled as novels by modern research) with the exception of a few passages in Chariton and the fragmentary novels.[6] They can, however, be found in one text which, with rare exceptions,[7] is often ignored in the historiography of the genre of the Greek novel, that is Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, the late work of Xenophon, which contains all the defining elements of a historical novel with biographical traits. Above all in this text, written before the Hellenistic age, the interaction between the varying pre- and subtexts that led to the birth of the genre of the novel can be seen.[8]

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[6] See especially Hägg (1987).

[7] With the exception of Hägg (1983) 113.

[8] Otto Weinreich's analysis of the birth of the genre in his afterword to *Heliodor* (Reymer [1970] 348f.) excellently arranges the candidates which are discussed in research as the mother and father of the novel: "Der griechische Liebesroman war die Frucht einer Liaison, die das gealterte Epos mit der kapriziös reizvollen hellenistischen Historiographie einging. Der Bastard wurde ein anziehendes und von der jungen Mutter her auch vitales Geschöpf, mit manchen Patengeschenken von den Musen des Dramas und der Liebespoesie bedacht. Im Jungenalter las er gern Münchhausiaden und Geschichten aus fernen Ländern und lernte in der Rhetorenschule einiges Nützliche. Aber der Makel seiner Illegitimität war doch so stark, daß keine antike Ars poetica es wagte, den munteren Bankert in die vornehme Gesellschaft des alten literarischen Adels aufzunehmen. Kein antiker Philologe stellte ihm eine Carte d'identité aus, die es uns erleichtern würde, ihn zu identifizieren. Nicht einmal einen ehrlichen Familiennamen bekam er: nach Abenteurerart nannte er sich bald so, bald so, und auf Legitimität haltende Literaturpäpste sprachen sowenig wie möglich von

In the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon describes the life of the older Cyrus, the founder of the Median-Persian Empire, from his boyhood to kingship.[9] In the arrangement of his work, Xenophon follows the historical facts marginally and in a cursory manner. In Breitenbach's *RE* article (cols. 1707–1717) the "historical and pseudo-historical element" and the sources are discussed at length with the following conclusion: "Pseudohistorisch ist der ganze übrige Verlauf der Handlung" (col. 1716, "All the rest of the plot is pseudo-historical"). Xenophon freely directs the plot of *his* story, he places chronologically separate events together, and he invents a number of characters which are entirely unhistorical. Xenophon includes characters from his own time and experience of the Persians and projects them back into the sixth century.[10] This is primarily the case for the protagonist in the *Cyropaedia*, who is actually a copy of the younger Cyrus, the Cyrus of the *Anabasis*[11] and the names of a series of Persians, which he likewise invented.[12] The most noteworthy invention, however, is the character of the Median king Cyaxares, a creation of Xenophon, who, for dramaturgical reasons, is portrayed as an interim ruler. With Cyaxares, Cyrus comes to power not as a usurper, but as a peaceful successor. Even the verifiable historical characters are only "placeholders" in the canvas of history and fiction, which Xenophon characterises freely according to the needs of his work.

In considering this interplay between history and fiction in the *Cyropaedia*, all the aforementioned attributes of a historical novel can be found: A title that provides the topic and the chronological distance from the reader; historical figures and historical events which locate the proceedings in times past; and details on the culture and *mentalité* which differentiate it from the world of the audience. Additionally, signs of authenticity, such as the exact number of troops, are meant to underline the author's detailed method and his knowledge of the

ihm. Eine erfreuliche Ausnahme machte Photios, der Patriarch von Konstantinopel (als literarischer Omnivorage). Der Wildling fand aber, vom leistungsfähigen alexandrinischen Papyrus-Buchhandel subventioniert, auch ohne Paß seinen Weg in die Welt. Er hatte große Vorzüge, aber auch Schwächen und Schattenseiten, wie schließlich jedes Menschenkind. Er wurde erstaunlich langlebig und zeugte eine unübersehbare Nachkommenschaft".

[9] See still Breitenbach (1966); especially Tatum (1989).

[10] Breitenbach (1966) 1713f.

[11] Compare especially *Anabasis* 1.9 (Cyrus' obituary) with the introductory chapters of the *Cyropaedia*. Cf. Zimmermann (1992).

[12] Breitenbach (1966) 1714.

material.[13] Formulations, such as ὡς εἰκός, illustrate the author's common sense. Collectively these elements guarantee the plausibility of the narrative.[14]

However, the historical novel is not an end in itself; the *Cyropaedia* is not a reconstructing historical novel, but rather parabolical. The image of the past which Xenophon creates is supposed to serve as a looking glass for the present day and for the development of his political programme which he sets out in the proem. Even though its authenticity is disputed, the final chapter 8.8 illustrates the suggestion that the past should be read with constant reference to the present day. Here the decadent Persia of Xenophon's time is contrasted with Persia at its height under Cyrus. The present day is also integrated into the narrative with the frequently used phrase ἔτι καὶ νῦν, "and even still today" (cf. 8.6.14).

Xenophon expounds an ideological programme in the proem of the *Cyropaedia* which should find its expression in the text. The question he raises (which also appears in his other writings) deals with the question of the ideal ruler, and specifically how changes in different types of government could be avoided (1.1).[15] While no conflicts are discernible in the relationship between cattle and herdsman, since the animals obey the herder willingly because they can benefit from his "authority", it seems that for human beings nothing could be more difficult than to rule over men. One exception occurred to Xenophon's mind during his contemplations, Cyrus, the man who ruled over many men, cities and ethnic groups who were in turn willingly subordinate (1.3 the ideal of the ἑκόντων ἄρχειν). On account of this man, Xenophon had to change his preconceived opinion that it was impossible for human beings to rule over people content to be ruled for their own benefit. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to investigate Cyrus' origins, what natural endowments (*physis*) he possessed and what sort of education he had enjoyed to excel in government (1.6).

The programmatic theme of the *Cyropaedia* is therefore given in its title. The topic of Cyrus' education nearly dominates the whole work from 1.3 to 8.5. The beginning and end of his education are marked by Cyrus' father, Cambyses, who at the end of Book One introduces

[13] Cf. Breitenbach (1966) 1715f.

[14] In the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon includes this *communis opinio* by frequently inserting φανερὸς ἦν. In the *Anabasis*, ὁμολογουμένως is inserted instead.

[15] Cf. Zimmermann (1999).

Cyrus to the virtues which a ruler should endow using Socratic dialogue. Cambyses discharges him from his custody in 8.5 with further advice. Cyrus, therefore, follows Xenophon's ideal of ἄρχεσθαι καὶ ἄρχειν: "Only he who is able to obey, knows how to rule", to the highest degree. All other characters in the work are contrasting figures to Cyrus, and serve to reveal his character and moral virtues.[16]

The result is that Xenophon combines the form of (pseudo-) historiography with biography, or rather with the encomium, a likely predecessor of biography. In looking at Xenophon's *Agesilaus*, it is evident that part of the repertoire of the encomium is a treatise on the origins of the *laudandus* (parents, home, customs, and rites), education and endowment (φύσις) and his qualities (ἀρεταί). While in the *Agesilaus* the relation between the two elements of the encomium, the catalogue of deeds (ἔργα, πράξεις) and virtues (ἀρεταί) is well-balanced, the *Cyropaedia* (with the exception of 1.1f. and 8.8) contains only the narrative of deeds.

In the following I will summarise the results of this short analysis of the *Cyropaedia*, bearing in mind the characteristics of the different genres which are found in the work.

1. The historiography provides the basic structure, which in the fourth century, after Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon's *Hellenica*, became as it were the ideal form of prose and the ideal medium for *the* literary form of extended writing. Reference to history is inherent throughout the *Cyropaedia* and it is continuously brought to the attention of the reader.
2. With θαυμάζεσθαι (1.6), the encomium, the second basic structure, is introduced. It must be stressed that in the historiography the encomiastic element is always present in obituaries. This can be seen, for example, in Pericles' obituary in Thucydides 2.65 and especially in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (Cyrus' obituary in 1.9 and the obituaries of the Greek generals in 2.6). It is important that in the *Anabasis* Xenophon uses the obituaries to reflect on dominance and rule. Together these obituaries create a contrast between the depraved and imperfect rule of the Greek generals and the ideal rule of Cyrus.
3. There is yet another element to the narrative: the Panthea-Abradatas-Araspas romance. This love story, divided between Books

[16] I limit myself to these general statements and refer to Zimmermann (1989).

4.6.11 – 5.1.17, is included in the plot of the *Cyropaedia* to illustrate how Cyrus embodies to the highest degree the virtue of *enkrateia*, which includes both self-restraint and self-control, as well as the virtue of *sophrosyne*, the ability to recognise one's own capabilities. In order to avoid temptation, Cyrus did not want to lay eyes on the captured lady of Susa, when he heard of her overwhelming beauty. While Araspas had vehemently argued that love was subject to human will in an earlier discussion with Cyrus, Cyrus later displayed both sympathy and clemency towards his friend Araspas when he fell in love with Panthea.

4. Socrates' influence on Xenophon can be traced in the numerous didactic dialogues, which are similar in form to Socrates' dialogues in the *Memorabilia*.
5. Xenophon places his concept of the ideal ruler[17] not only at a chronological distance from the present day, but at a geographical distance as well, in Persia approximately 200 years earlier. Placing the concept of ideal states in far-away places and times is a typical approach used in the creation of later utopias.

All dominant and sub-dominant elements of the genre of the novel in its historical form can be found in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*. Because the encomiastic-biographical theme is maintained throughout the novel, whereby "the plot is centred on the hero"[18] (a structural characteristic of all educational and coming of age novels), all other elements in the novel are subordinate. As the genre develops, the marginal love story is elevated to be the dominant element. This most likely results from the influence of New Comedy. The markers of later romance novels are, however, already to be found in the Panthea episode: The enchanting beauty of the female protagonist; the separation of the lovers; the temptation of a third party, which is resisted; the lovers' reunion; and a wet-nurse who acts as a confidante. The only difference between the *Cyropaedia* and the later romance novels is that the love story found in the Panthea episode does not have a happy ending.

The last question which should be raised is why historiography should have given the novel its basic form. Other presumably earlier novels, such as *Callirhoe*, the *Ninus* and the fragment of *Metiochus and*

[17] In a sidenote it should be mentioned that by doing so, Xenophon creates the genre of the "mirror of princes".
[18] Cf. Esselborn-Krumbiegel (1983) 18–26.

Parthenope,[19] likewise have historical elements and thus conform to the historiographic model. This can be explained on practical and aesthetic grounds. At the time of the composition of the *Cyropaedia*, in the middle of the 4th century BC, historiography was the prosaic *Großform*, which with its authorial narrator, its speeches and dialogues, encomiastic insertions, reflective passages, ekphraseis, etc., offered itself as a model for the novel as the new form of extended writing. Just as epic acted as a literary model for historiography, the new *Großform* novel took its structure from historiography. As the novel developed, the historiographical features became increasingly muted and ultimately disappeared in the Roman Imperial age. The love story, however, which was established as a subordinate theme in the *Cyropaedia*, increasingly became the defining feature of the genre.

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[19] Stephens, Winkler (1995) 23–100.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REUNION AND REGENERATION: NARRATIVE PATTERNS IN ANCIENT GREEK NOVELS AND CHRISTIAN ACTS[1]

David Konstan

It is widely supposed—in my view correctly—that the five romantic Greek novels, by Xenophon, Chariton, Longus, Achilles Tatius, and Heliodorus, are more or less cut from a similar piece of cloth. As Sophie Lalanne has recently stated (2006: 47): "Tous les romans grecs racontent la même histoire d'amour et d'aventures, avec des variantes qui, bien que nombreuses, ne modifient pas la structure d'ensemble". Lalanne goes on to indicate the major features of this common story, including love at first sight between two aristocratic youths, a subsequent journey by sea which typically results in a shipwreck and the separation of the couple (this element is missing from *Daphnis and Chloe*), and a series of adventures and dangers that threaten them in various parts of the world until, "au terme de cette mise à l'épreuve, les deux adolescents sont réunis et rentrent triomphalement dans la cité de leurs pères" (ibid.).

If we accept that this pattern does in fact inform the Greek novels,[2] can we say that it serves as the vehicle of a particular theme or content—that is, does the narrative trajectory identified above itself function to some degree as a signifier, in the way that Roland Barthes

[1] This paper was originally presented under the title, "Wiedervereinigung und Wiederherstellung: Erzählmuster in antiken Romanen und apokryphen Apostelakten", to the Sonderforschungsbereich 644, "Transformationen der Antike", at the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin on 19 July 2006. I am most grateful to the audience there for their comments, and especially to Prof. Dr. Werner Röcke, Marco Formisano, Sebastian Möckel, and Julia Weitbrecht for having invited me to participate in their project. I thank also Regina Höschele, who translated this paper into German for that occasion; she and Ilaria Ramelli also made invaluable comments on an earlier draft.

[2] Morales (this volume) raises some important objections to subsuming the five Greek romantic novels under a single, unique rubric; however, Hägg (this volume) usefully defines a series of characteristics that distinguish the romantic novels from related types of fiction; see also the chapter (this volume) by Jouanno.

affirms for certain myths (Barthes 1957)? Or is it rather the case, as I suggest below, that a single paradigm may be the bearer of different, even opposite, meanings? What is more, some of the novels, while conforming loosely to the structure set out by Lalanne, nevertheless diverge from it in important ways; might such a deviation be the product at least in part (as I believe) of two (or more) intersecting narrative paradigms? If so, what effect does such a double structure have on the novel's theme? Finally, the plot patterns that are characteristic of the Greek romantic novels have also been identified in tales of a quite different stamp, such as the various so-called apocryphal acts of the Christian apostles and the lives of saints. Do these narratives, then, also have something in common with the novels at the level of theme, despite the apparent diversity of their context and purpose?

In my book, *Sexual Symmetry* (1994), I argued that the story pattern of the novels was particularly suited to illustrating the steadfastness of love, or more specifically of *erôs*, in the face of numerous trials and temptations, and, what is more, that these tales celebrated what I took to be a new conception of erotic passion as a mutual and stable sentiment that might serve as a basis for citizen marriage. In genres other than the novel, I maintained, erotic desire was typically conceived as one-sided or asymmetrical: it was a relation between a lover (*erastês*) and a beloved (*erômenos* or *erômenê*), rather than a reciprocal form of affection. *Erôs* was powerful but transient, as opposed to the more enduring bond represented by the Greek term *philia* (and to some extent also by *storgê*). To demonstrate the long-term durability of *erôs*, it was necessary to put it to the test. In the end, the fidelity of the protagonists overcomes all hardships, and provides a solid foundation for a new ideal of marriage, predicated on reciprocal (symmetrical) desire and commitment.

This is not the only significance, however, that may be associated with the narrative format of the novels. Sophie Lalanne, for example, in the book cited above, offers a quite different interpretation. In the three moments of enamorment, separation, and reunion of the young hero and heroine, Lalanne sees a version of the rite of passage, the structure of which was set forth almost a century ago by the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1981; [1]1909). Van Gennep posited three stages in such rites of initiation. As Lalanne describes it, "Ces rites de passages prennent la forme d'un passage matériel qui consiste le plus souvent à traverser une porte, une rivière, un lieu ou une frontière; ils peuvent se décomposer en trois phases, elles-mêmes divisibles, de séparation, de

marge ou de latence, enfin d'agrégation" (p. 101). Although Lalanne too notes the reciprocal nature of the passion that unites the hero and heroine in the novels, she sees this as a symptom of the still undifferentiated sexual characteristics of the young lovers. By the end of the story, the hero emerges as a fully masculine or *andreios* figure, having demonstrated his courage or *andreia* in battle or in some analogous way. With this, the previously symmetrical relationship between the couple is superseded: the male assumes his rightful, dominant place in the adult citizen community, while the female is relegated to a subordinate role. The novels, on this reading, serve not to introduce a new vision of mutual passion, but on the contrary to reaffirm the traditional sexual dimorphism of the classical city-state, which was, Lalanne argues, very much alive and well in the epoch in which the novels circulated.

John Morgan, in his commentary on *Daphnis and Chloe* (2004), takes a similar view to that of Lalanne: "Longus has staged a story of transition, which we can describe as initiation, rite of passage, or simply growing up" (p. 13). What is more, "The development of love ... is marked by a shift from equality and spontaneity and towards the conventions of society" (p. 12); the fundamental theme of the novel is "the socialization of DC's [Daphnis and Chloe's] gender roles" (p. 210). The inset stories involving Pan might seem to point to a more ambivalent attitude toward adult sexuality, which in these episodes takes the form of rape, as in the case of Syrinx. Morgan, however, argues that "Pan and Syrinx in some way represent DC [Daphnis and Chloe]", and he concludes that "D[aphnis] must eventually accept his male sexuality, even if this necessitates the victimisation of C[hloe]; she, for her part, must learn the full implications of her naïve wish to be D[aphnis]'s syrinx (1.14.3), and also that to flee male sexuality is impossible and self-destructive" (p. 196). I would maintain, on the contrary, that the episode represents a deep counter-current in the text, one that exposes the conventional picture of marriage and adult sexuality as predicated on domination and subordination (cf. Pandiri 1985). Clearly, the narrative paradigm of the novels lends itself to more than one interpretation: the correct one—if there is a single correct one—will depend in part on how one assesses the larger social context. But it is possible too that the several novels exploit the common narrative paradigm differently. If *Daphnis and Chloe* leaves room for ambiguity in respect to the image of *erôs* that it projects, Chariton's *Callirhoe*, it may be argued, conforms better to the initiatory model proposed by Lalanne, whereas Xenophon's

Ephesiaca, despite the manifest similarities of its plot with that of Chariton's novel, in fact projects an ideal of sexual symmetry along the lines that I set out in my earlier study (for the contrasting visions of these two novels, see Konstan 2008). I return to Xenophon of Ephesus' novel at the end of this paper, where it is considered in the light of several apparently more distant texts.

Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* differs from the other four Greek romances in that the journey it recounts is linear rather than circular (see Konstan 2002; Konstan 2004–2005). That is, unlike Chariton's and Xenophon's tales, which begin and end in Syracuse and Ephesus respectively, and different too from the stories of Longus and Achilles Tatius, which again are rounded off by a return to the original point of departure of the hero and heroine, the protagonists in the *Aethiopica* begin their voyage in Delphi and end up in Meroe, in Ethiopia. As Romain Brethes observes (2007: 172): "À la différence des romans de Chariton et de Xénophon, adeptes d'une rigoureuse *Ringstruktur*, les *Éthiopiques* présentent un caractère linéaire". It accords with this forward movement and sense of a destination, moreover, that the hero and heroine of the *Aethiopica* are for the most part not separated, as they are in the other romances: for they are not so much in search of one another as they are in pursuit of a goal in a distant land. Nevertheless, as long as they are on their journey they refrain from sexual intercourse. In Chariton and Xenophon, the protagonists have consummated their marriage at the beginning of the story, and it is only their physical separation that keeps them from enjoying each other henceforward. Heliodorus (like Longus, though in a different way) needs to provide another motive for their restraint, in this case a commitment to avoiding premarital sex. The exceptional emphasis in the *Aethiopica* on chastity outside of marriage is a consequence of, or at least coordinate with, its narrative formula: the goal of union in marriage is mapped onto the objective of reaching the final destination in Ethiopia, and as Theagenes and Chariclea approach the one they simultaneously come nearer to the other.

In one sense, the *Aethiopica* too represents a return to the point of origin, insofar as Chariclea is by birth a princess of Ethiopia and her long journey is in fact taking her home. But if this is true for the heroine of the novel, it is not at all the case for the hero, Theagenes: he is a Thessalian and descendant of Achilles, and in the end he will have left his country behind, to reside henceforward in a new land. The transit from Greece to Ethiopia is not a homecoming or *nostos* for

him, but a kind of pilgrimage.[3] Insofar as it culminates in the permanent union of Theagenes and Chariclea, the *Aethiopica* conforms to the pattern of the romantic novels generally. But the arrival of the couple in Ethiopia has the further consequence of bringing about a radical change in the religious customs of the nation, namely the abolition of human sacrifice. Heliodorus thus seems to have welded together two distinct story lines: the romantic trials and tribulations of a pair of young lovers who are finally joined (or reunited) in wedlock, and a tale of wandering and discovery that leads to moral regeneration in a foreign place.[4] I have suggested as a possible prototype of this latter pattern the exodus of the Jews from Egypt under the leadership of Moses (see Konstan 2004–2005). Moses' role may be compared with that of Calasiris in the *Aethiopica*: he too is a guide who dies without reaching the promised land. So too, the stratagem adopted by Theagenes and Chariclea, by which they represent themselves as brother and sister in order to avoid harm at the hands of a potential rival, is identical to that of Abraham and Sara when they descend into Egypt (*Genesis* 12:11–19). Finally, the biblical story too involves the abolition of human sacrifice, when a lamb is substituted for Isaac. Lest this seem far-fetched, we may recall that the church historian Socrates (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.22.157–161) identified—not wholly implausibly—Heliodorus the novelist with the well-known bishop of Tricca in Thessaly (see Ramelli 2001: 125–130). However this may be, Heliodorus evidently created a new configuration for the novel, one that lent itself to expressing the spiritual transformation of a whole people, above and beyond the evolution of the romantic bond between the hero and heroine.

Various parallels suggest themselves for this connection between a voyage to a distant place and the emergence of a new order. It is possible to read Virgil's Aeneid in this vein, for example, with its preordained foundation of a new realm in Hesperia; here too, an elder guide, Anchises, fails to make it to the promised land, and what is more the journey ends with a marriage. In a different register, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* follows the travels of Lucius, mostly in the guise of an ass, through various regions of the world until he recovers his human form and finds salvation in the cult of Isis and Osiris, first in Corinth

[3] It is worth noting that the couple Aegialeus and Thelxinoe, in Xenophon of Ephesus' novel (5.1), also end up in a place other than their original home in Sparta: in this novel, mutual love takes precedence over an arranged marriage.

[4] There are respects in which Ethiopia represents not just a land in need of moral transformation, but a utopia in its own right; see Futre Pinheiro (2006).

and finally in Rome, far from his ancestral home, whether we take this to be Greece, as the prologue would lead us to believe (*Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyrea et Taenaros Spartiatica … mea uetus prosapia est*, 1.1), or Madaura in Africa, Apuleius' own birthplace, as the end of the novel has it (11.27.32; see Slater 2002). Apuleius has grafted a story of religious redemption onto the folktale motif of a human being transformed into a beast and then restored to his original shape, which he found in the Greek *Onos* of Lucian (or in Lucian's source). In Apuleius' hands, the metamorphosis serves as an analogue to the hero's spiritual evolution, from a bestial moral condition to an enlightened state (on the ass in pagan and Christian literature, see Spittler [2008] 199–221).

It is no surprise that Christian narratives of salvation often adopted the narrative pattern of a voyage to a far land as their model, rather than that of the separation and reunion of a couple, although this latter paradigm too has its place in them. Two such tales will concern us here, both datable to the fifth century: the *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena*, and more particularly the latter part centering on Polyxena, which is closer in structure to the Greek romantic novels; and the *Acts of Philip*, where again the second part has a unity and coherence of its own. Here I concentrate on the mission of Philip to Hierapolis, beginning with Chapter 8 in the old Bonnet edition and continuing through Chapter 15 in the new text edited by Bovon, Bouvier, and Amsler (1999), which has doubled what was known of this narrative thanks to the discovery in 1974, by Bovon and Bouvier, of a new manuscript in the library at Mt. Athos. It is an agreeable coincidence that Philip makes an appearance in the tale of Polyxena as well.

Philip is a reluctant apostle. When he hears that his appointed destination is a particularly idolatrous city in Greece, he breaks out in tears, and Mary, Philip's sister, explains that he is not pleased with his lot. Jesus says to her: "I know that you are noble and manly [or courageous: *andreia*] in spirit and blessed among women, and that the thinking [*phronêma*] of women has entered Philip, whereas masculine and manly [*arrenikon kai andreion*] thinking is in you" (p. 243). Jesus accordingly bids Mary accompany Philip in order to lend him support (he will send along Bartholomew and John as well). One might have supposed that Philip is effeminate in the sense of being easily frightened and lacking in valor, like the heroes of the Greek novels, who are often as passive as the heroines or even more so. Thus, when Habrocomes and Anthia, in Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*, are captured by pirates, they throw themselves at the feet of their captors and lament with a single voice (2.1.1–6). For

the reciprocal passion that characterizes the protagonists of the novels is manifested also, I have argued, in a similarity of disposition: the male is rendered more docile in proportion that the female, forced to defend her integrity by her own devices, acquires greater determination and fortitude (cf. Konstan 1994: 15–26). Since both protagonists are at once lover and beloved, they share equally in opposite kinds of stereotyped behavior: masculine vigor and feminine timidity or diffidence. This is so whether we regard the novels as projecting a new ideal of symmetrical *erôs* or, with Morgan and Lalanne, as tracing an evolution from the relatively undifferentiated sexuality of adolescents to the divergent gender roles characteristic of adults in traditional Greek society. Indeed, Jesus bids Mary to cast off her feminine appearance [*gunaikeion eidos*] when she travels with her brother (p. 245).

However, the story is not so simple. Jesus is concerned not because of any faint-heartedness in Philip, but rather because he is overly bold (*tolmêros estin sphodra*, p. 243), a quality that would have been deemed hypermasculine by the novelists. The pirate leader Apsyrtus accuses Habrocomes of being *tolmêros* (2.6.1) when he is under the false impression that the young man has attempted to rape his daughter Manto, for example, and in Chariton (1.7.3) such rashness is a quality respected in bandits. More particularly, Jesus is worried that, when provoked by enemies, Philip may return evil for evil (*antapodounai antapodoseis*), a paradigmatically non-Christian response that is thematised in the subsequent narrative. This quality of forbearance, or indeed of returning good for evil, requires a special kind of courage, that is, an ability to resist the temptation to do harm to another. Philip himself, when he receives Jesus' orders, weeps again for fear that when he reaches his destination and is subjected to great ordeals, he will not be able to bear up and will return evil for evil rather than good, as Jesus bids him (p. 255). Jesus explains in turn the virtue of refraining from harming one's enemies, when it is in one's power to do so (cf. also pp. 263–264).

At the conclusion of the *Martyrdom of Philip*, which carries forward and serves as the sequel to the narrative begun in the eighth Act (see Bovon et al. 1999: 2.377, etc.), when Philip is being crucified upside down while Bartholomew is being tormented at his side and Mary is threatened with violence, Philip exclaims: "Let us in turn pronounce that fire descend from Heaven and burn them" (ms. A, p. 375; cf. ms. V, p. 374). A little later, after the arrival of John (and when Mary has resumed her human form, after being concealed in the guise of a glass chest), Philip expressly declares that his patience is at an end

and that he wishes to destroy his tormentors (ms. A, p. 383; cf. ms. V, p. 382), and despite John's efforts to dissuade him, he prays to Jesus, the "dispenser of numberless mercies" (*ho proballôn aph' heautou tous oiktirmous tous anarithmêtous*), that the earth open and the abyss swallow up his godless enemies (ms. A, p. 387; cf. ms. V, p. 386). His petition is immediately answered, and the evil Tyrannognophos and the entire population of the city, save for those who have embraced Christianity, are engulfed (p. 389).[5] At this point, Jesus himself appears, and asks: "How have you, Philip, become so pitiless [*asplankhnos*] as to curse your enemies in anger [*orgê*]?" (ms. V, p. 392). Philip inquires in return (in ms. V) why Christ is angry with him, and has foreborn to trample on his enemies, when (here following ms. A) he, Philip, was reluctant to go to this city in the first place, and yet he fulfilled the command of Christ and rid it of demons (pp. 392–395). To this, Jesus replies that Philip failed to fulfill the injunction not to return evil for evil, and therefore he must wait forty days after his death before he can enter heaven. Hereupon Jesus drops a luminous cross in the shape of a ladder into the abyss, by which all the townspeople, save for Tyrannognophos and the pagan priests, ascend. Before Philip dies, he delivers a sermon to the crowd, explaining that he is in debt to Christ because he returned evil for evil (ms. A, p. 403; ms. V, p. 402 speaks of his anger; cf. also ms. A, p. 419; ms. V, p. 418).

I have traced the theme of evil returned for evil to indicate how, over the course of his travels, Philip learns the deeper meaning of Christian mercy and the obligation to requite harm with good. The *Acts* thus represent an education of Philip in true endurance, in a way analogous to the testing and maturation of the lovers in the novels, where they learn to combine *erôs* with fidelity as the basis for marriage (on my interpretation, at all events). But let us return to the characterization of Mary as masculine. Given that maleness is associated here with submission and patience, the nature of woman is represented as being opposed to obedience, and is associated explicitly with the behavior of Eve. Jesus tells Mary: "When you go to that city, the serpents of that city must see you altered from the form of Eve and having no female form, since the form of Eve is woman, and she is that very shape. The shape of Adam is man, and you know that from the beginning there was

[5] For discussion of a similar instance of vengeance by one of Jesus' disciples visited upon ungodly enemies, see the discussion by König (this volume) of the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* (29–31).

enmity on the part of Eve toward Adam". Christ recounts Eve's part in the fall of Adam, and concludes: "You, then, Mary, flee the poverty of Eve and become rich in yourself!" (ms. G, pp. 245–247). Woman is thus associated with disobedience and temptation, the negative counterpart to manly virtue. This view of women's moral frailty is not wholly incompatible with classical Greek attitudes, but it acquires a different nuance when the masculine self-control to which it is opposed takes the form not of courage in war, as in Aristotle, for example, but the more Socratic ethical imperative always to do good, even in requiting evil.

Soon after commencing their voyage to Heliapolis, or, as it is called throughout the *Acts*, Opheorymus, the three travelers, Philip, Mary, and Bartholomew meet up with a talking leopard and his sidekick, a kid. The leopard, who is the more articulate of the two, explains that he had attacked a herd of goats, but the kid he was about to devour spoke to him and converted him to mildness of temper. He requests permission to accompany the apostle on his journey, and to shed his bestial nature (ms. V, p. 268). The apostle, not easily taken in, asks to see the kid, who is hiding behind a tree. Philip is duly impressed by this transformation in a savage animal, and taking it as a lesson for human beings he prays that both beasts acquire a human heart and speak as men do. The animals rise on their hind legs and glorify God. From this point on they travel with the Apostle, forming a crew that somehow puts me in mind of Dorothy, the scarecrow, the tin man, and the cowardly lion in *The Wizard of Oz*.

The animals return in the twelfth Act, preserved in ms. A, where they burst into tears and lament in their own language, because Philip has not deemed them worthy of the eucharist. When Philip asks what troubles them, the leopard answers in a human voice and, with a rather refined control of rhetoric, notes the change in his nature, pleads for pity, and even goes so far as to relinquish his own claim to consideration, on the grounds of his savagery, in order to argue that at least the kid deserves communion! Philip prays that the animals may experience a metamorphosis, not only of spirit, but also of body, so that they may be wholly like human beings. He then sprinkles them with water, and "at that moment, the shape of their face and body gradually changed to the likeness of human beings, and they stood up on their feet and extended their forelegs in place of hands, and they glorified God" (ms. A, p. 307). It is true that the transformation does not seem to be quite complete, since people they encounter continue to be amazed at animals speaking like humans (Act 13, p. 313; Act 14, p. 329). But it is

clear that the animals' progress toward human intellect and form mirrors both the spiritual growth of Philip himself, as he learns to return good for evil, and his success in converting the Greeks to the worship of Christ, and hence working a transformation in the culture of mankind.[6]

The paradigm of a one-way journey to a distant land, together with the theme of moral development, the motif of animals metamorphosed into human form, and the spread of a new religious doctrine or attitude, would seem to link the narrative pattern of the *Acts of Philip* to that of Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, and, apart from the role of animals, to Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* as well. Yet there is no reason why a story of separation and return might not be bent to a similar purpose. The tale of Polyxena would seem to be a case in point. Polyxena is expressly described as beautiful (*hôraia*, 22), and the narrative of her search for faith begins with a dream, in which she is rescued from the jaws of a dragon by a handsome youth (*neanias eueidês*), understood of course to be Christ. She is then carried off from her native Spain by a vicious man, who is a rival to her suitor (*mnêstêr*, 23): the rival is clearly meant to be equated with the serpent in her dream, and one expects that the young hero who rescues her stands in some relation to the suitor. Polyxena's abductor plans to take her to Babylonia, but the apostle Peter, who chances to be sailing by at this very moment, deflects their ship to Greece, where Philip rescues Polyxena and entrusts her to the care of a holy man. The abductor, nothing daunted, raises an army of 8,000 men to retake the girl, but they are defeated by thirty servants. In the meantime, however, Polyxena has fled, and takes shelter in the cave of

[6] There is an enormous literature on the role of animals as symbols of moral education; cf. Spittler (2008) for a survey with ample bibliography. The generally positive attitude toward the enlightenment of animals in early Christian literature stands in contrast to a story related by Giraldus Cambrensis (Giraldus of Wales), in his *Topographia Hiberniae* (late 12th century; translation in Giraldus Cambrensis 1951: 53–56); I give it in the encapsulated (and somewhat altered) version by William Butler Yeats (1888: 148): "Before Giraldus Cambrensis came to Ireland, a monk wandering in a forest at night came upon two wolves, one of whom was dying. The other entreated him to give the dying wolf the last sacrament. He said the mass, and paused when he came to the viaticum. The other, on seeing this, tore the skin from the breast of the dying wolf, laying bare the form of an old woman. Thereon the monk gave the sacrament. Years afterwards he confessed the matter, and when Giraldus visited the country, was being tried by the synod of the bishops. To give the sacrament to an animal was a great sin. Was it a human being or an animal? On the advice of Giraldus they sent the monk, with papers describing the matter, to the Pope for his decision. The result is not stated. Giraldus himself was of the opinion that the wolf-form was an illusion, for, he argued, only God can change the form".

a lioness. When the lioness returns, Polyxena implores it not to harm her, since she has not yet been baptized, and the beast, moved by her petition, obeys and indeed guides her out of the forest, whereupon she has the good fortune to cross paths with the apostle Andrew. Together, they meet Rebecca at the well, and Andrew prepares to baptize them, not without encouragement, however, from the lioness, who turns up to testify to God's pity even for irrational beasts (30). Andrew registers the lesson, and completes the baptism of the two women. As they proceed on their way, attempting to find return passage to Spain, they fall in with a kindly ass-driver, himself a Christian, who counsels Polyxena to change her form to that of a man, so that no one will seize her on account of her beauty (33). But a wicked prefect spies her and carries her off (Rebecca manages to escape). Polyxena prays that her virginity not be corrupted (35); when he summons her to his bed, Polyxena manages to convince his servants to pretend that she has a fever, a device not unknown to the novels, for example Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* (5.4). In the meantime, the prefect's son, who has been converted to Christianity by none other than Paul and Thecla, conspires to escape with Polyxena to Spain, again recommending that she assume his appearance, that is, the attire of a man (37). However, their plan is discovered, and the prefect orders both to be thrown to the lions, but the lioness that is released against them—very likely the same one that spoke up for Polyxena's baptism—merely licks their feet, at which the prefect and the whole populace are moved to adopt the new faith (for the analogous story of Androcles and the lion, see Osborne [2007] 135–139 and Spittler [2008] 182–189). The prefect arranges to have Polyxena and his son transported back to Spain, whither she arrives, not without a small misfortune on the way, and is reunited with the apostle Paul and with her sister Xanthippe, who had prayed for 40 days in behalf of Polyxena's virginity. To top it off, the violent abductor, who intends to carry off Polyxena yet again, also is moved to believe and is baptized by Paul, along with Polyxena's original suitor. Thus all are reunited in the bosom of Christ.

Two themes seem to be fused together in the narrative of Polyxena's adventures. On the one hand, there is her own moral progress, which is linked with the conversion of Greeks, as in the *Acts of Philip*, and of unbelievers back in Spain. We may take as an emblem of this spiritual development the episode of the lioness, which thanks to God's mercy acquires a gentle disposition that is explicitly described as an example for human beings. Again, the analogy with the *Acts of Philip*

is clear: a beast attaining human language is a symbol of mankind's own transformation to a higher state. Polyxena's assuming male attire once more has an echo in Philip, where Mary adopts a masculine appearance (one thinks too of Perpetua's vision in the narrative of her martyrdom [10], in which she imagines herself in the guise of a male; see Konstan 2009). At the same time, there is a powerful emphasis not just on the adoption of the Christian faith but also on the preservation of Polyxena's virginity. The importance of chastity is deeply embedded in Christian belief of this period, and given the conversion of Polyxena's suitor as well as of her abductor, along with Xanthippe's earlier resolve to abstain from sex with her husband, it is probably safe to conclude that Polyxena will remain a virgin for life, rather than marry and have a family. Nevertheless, the focus of the narrative is on her efforts to protect herself from the violent attempts of unwanted lovers, and most particularly the rival of her legitimate suitor, and this motif is entirely compatible with that of preserving oneself intact for one's beloved—one of the fundamental motifs in the Greek novels.[7]

It is now time to return to Xenophon of Ephesus, and we may begin by considering an unusual dream that the hero, Habrocomes, has while he is in prison, having been incarcerated by the pirate leader, Apsyrtus, who is under the impression that Habrocomes had attempted to rape his daughter. Anthia has just bade him farewell, and she is about to be carried far away by Manto, Apsyrtus' jealous daughter. Xenophon writes (2.8.2): "He thought that he saw his father Lycomedes, in black garb, wander over every land and sea, then stand beside him in the prison and release him and liberate him from the cell. He himself became a horse and raced over a great extent of land, pursuing another horse, this one female, and finally he found the mare and became a human being again. Having thought that he saw these things, he leaped up and was a little more optimistic" (on possible parallels to this dream, see Konstan 2009). Although the account of the dream is quite brief, the symbolism is, I believe, clear: as in Apuleius, the metamorphosis of the protagonist into an animal and back into human form is a figure for the hero's psychic fall and deliverance. The vision begins with

[7] Gorman 2001, surveying the entire narrative of the *Acts of Polyxena and Xanthippe*, argues that the separation and reunion of the two women is constructed on the paradigm that informs the Greek romantic novels: "In its production of the relationship between Xanthippe and Polyxena, the *AXP* replicates the reciprocal bond that characterized Greek lovers" (p. 418).

Habrocomes in jail, bound and tormented; he is visited by an image of his father, that is, an idealized protector, and, once free, he must travel the world in the shape of a beast until he achieves his original shape once again. To be sure, there is a twist to the version in the *Ephesiaca*, namely that the hero is searching for his female counterpart.[8] This is in accord, obviously, with the motif of the separation and reunion of the primary couple that is paradigmatic for the Greek romantic novels. But the trials and travels of the protagonists in these novels themselves constitute a spiritual transformation as much for them as they do for Apuleius' Lucius or for Philip and Polyxena in the Christian narratives.

It is possible to understand the ordeals of Habrocomes and Anthia as the liminal phase of a ritual of initiation into adulthood, as Sophie Lalanne takes it; or one may see here rather, as I incline to do, a testing and triumph of mutual fidelity and the elevation of erotic passion to the status of a new ideal that challenges customary attitudes toward love and marriage. Both interpretations are compatible with the idea that faithfulness, endurance, and a commitment to personal chastity form the basis, in the novels, of a new sense of an autonomous self that is a common denominator between pagan and Christian narratives. While this is not the occasion for a detailed defense of this view of the Greek romances, we may illustrate it by quoting Anthia's words at the end of the *Ephesiaca*, and citing by way of comparison a brief passage from another novel. Reunited at last with Habrocomes, Anthia embraces him and says through her tears: "Husband and master, I have recovered you after wandering much land and sea, having escaped the threats of bandits, the designs of pirates, the outrages of brothel-keepers, bonds, graves, manacles, poisons and ditches, and I come to you, despite all, O Habrocomes lord of my soul, as I was when I first went from Tyre to Syria, and no one induced me to sin, not Moeris in Syria, nor Perilaus in Cilicia, nor Psammis and Polyidus in Egypt, nor Anchialus in Ethiopia, nor my master in Tarentum, but I have remained holy [*hagnê*] for you, having practiced every device of chastity [*sôphrosunê*]" (5.14.1–2). Anthia is here asserting her unalterable devotion, to be sure, but she is the same time affirming a sense of

[8] Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica* 4.proem, notes that, in a dream, "if a man is in love with a woman, he will see not the woman but rather a horse"; cf. 4.46: "for a horse signifies a woman"; see MacAlister (1996) 38–39; Plastira-Valkanou (2001) 141–142.

control over herself and her destiny, based on her commitment to physical and spiritual purity.[9]

In a now classic paper, Brent Shaw called attention to the response of Leucippe, in Achilles Tatius' novel, to the threat of rape at the hands of a man who has her in his power: "Take up all your instruments of torture, and at once; bring out against me the whips, the wheel, the fire, the sword. … I am naked, and alone, and a woman. But one shield and defense I have, which is my freedom, which cannot be struck down by whips, or cut by the sword, or burned by fire. My freedom is something I will not surrender—burn as you might, you will find that there is no fire hot enough to consume it" (6.21; trans. Shaw 1996: 271). Shaw comments: "The body itself is seen to embody identity/self/freedom and can itself be used to resist the final acts of violence imposed on it. … The presentation of Leukippê … is that of a woman who recognizes that although her body is owned, she is not. Though a slave, it is her will or consent that is to be the final arbiter of the self". In this respect, the Greek romantic novels, and not least among them Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*, bear witness to a new conception of personal autonomy, undoubtedly owing much to Stoic and Epicurean ideas of what is or is not "up to us" (*eph' hêmin*) but also of a piece with the narratives of spiritual endurance and transformation that entered into the construction of Christian views of holiness and self-mastery.[10]

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[9] Szepessy (2004) observes that, in contrast to other apocryphal acts, the *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena* focuses on the converted rather than on the deeds of the evangelist; thus, "Xanthippe appears to have been *proceeding along the road of inner enlightenment all by herself*" (p. 326), and the same is true of Polyxena (p. 337). Szepessy concludes that in placing "the converts in the centre" of the narrative, and concentrating on "the exploration of their emotions and consciousness," the author has resorted to "the methods of novel writing" (p. 340).

[10] The Stoics in particular appealed to narratives of heroic lives, above all those of Heracles and Odysseus, to represent their ideal of personal autonomy in the service of virtue, and Plato too held up Odysseus as a model of wisdom as a result of his previous ordeals (*Republic* 10.620C). See Montiglio (2005) 163–179, and cf. especially Apuleius *On the God of Socrates* 24: "Nec aliud te in eodem Vlixe Homerus docet, qui semper ei comitem uoluit esse prudentiam, quam poetico ritu Mineruam nuncupauit. Igitur hac eadem comite omnia horrenda subiit, omnia aduersa superauit. Quippe ea adiutrice Cyclopis specus introiit, sed egressus est; Solis boues uidit, sed abstinuit; ad inferos demeauit et ascendit; eadem sapientia comite Scyllam praeternauigauit nec ereptus est; Charybdi consaeptus est nec retentus est; Circae peculum bibit nec mutatus est; ad Lotophagos accessit nec remansit; Sirenas audiit." Apuleius represents Odysseus as successfully resisting all temptations, thanks to his prudence; it is possible, however, to see in Odysseus' account of his adventures (*Odyssey* 9–12) a narrative of developing self-control, beginning with a series of errors (boastfulness before the Cyclops, dalliance

So too, in the *Passio Anastasiae* (17.10–20), the soon to be martyred Irene declares: "Just as my flesh would endure beasts, fire, beatings, or any other punishment, so too it will endure a fornicator, a dog, a bear, or a serpent … For the soul cannot be faulted for impurities to which it does not consent … Willingness brings with it punishment, but necessity brings the crown" (*inquinamenta enim quae anima non consentit non suscipit reatus … voluntas enim habet poenam et necessitas parit coronam*.[11]looseness1

Although the plot form based on separation and reunion, and culminating in a return of the protagonists to the original point of departure, was particularly well suited to illustrating amorous loyalty and the preservation not so much of virginity as of sexual fidelity, it was hospitable as well to narratives of quest and conversion. Indeed, the seeds of the latter type are, I would claim, already present in what may be the earliest of the surviving Greek novels, Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*.[12]

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with Circe, the need to be tied to the mast if he is to resist the Sirens' song, etc.) but leading finally, in a kind of education of the hero, to his refusal to eat the cattle of the Sun.

[11] Text in Moretti (2006) 140; cf. the discussion of this theme in Moretti pp. 20–22. Moretti comments (22): "Tali affermazioni, che costituiscono un'aggiunta del redattore latino rispetto agli Atti greci, potrebbero essere la spia di un'attualizzazione del motivo romanzesco, che diverebbe lo spunto per una presa di posizione su un problema vivo al momento della composizione della PA".

[12] The relative dates of Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* and Chariton's *Callirhoe* are disputed, but I see no good reason for assuming the priority of the latter; for a review of the question, see Bowie (2002).

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CHAPTER EIGHT

NOVELISTIC AND ANTI-NOVELISTIC NARRATIVE IN THE *ACTS OF THOMAS* AND THE *ACTS OF ANDREW AND MATTHIAS*

Jason König

1. *Introduction*

One of the starting-points for this chapter is the desire to explore further two texts which still attract relatively little attention in studies of ancient fiction broadly defined. Those texts are the *Acts of Thomas* (*ATh*) and, especially, the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* (*AAMt*), whose horrifying depiction of cannibalistic violence is oddly neglected even by scholars interested in the apocryphal acts, let alone those who write on similar themes in Greco-Roman prose fiction. In addition, however, I wish to raise a set of wider questions which lie at the heart of the concerns of this volume, about how early Christian fiction characteristically represents its relationship with pagan, Greco-Roman culture, and with the genre of the ancient novel in particular. To be more specific: one driving force for this project is a sense of dissatisfaction with the way in which some have talked about novelistic genre for the apocryphal acts. There is still a tendency to hang on to a vestigial sense that we can and should categorise these texts as either "novelistic" or else "not properly novelistic". It seems to me that we need a much more dynamic model of the way in which these texts act out and explore a range of different poses in relation to non-Christian genres—a model, in other words, which can not only fit them in a very capacious conception of fiction of the kind Helen Morales advocates in this volume, but which also acknowledges the way in which they parade (at least sometimes) their subversiveness and stand-offishness in relation to pagan literature, navigating constantly between those opposite poles of attraction and resistance.

I should stress that other recent work on these texts has begun to move in the same direction: in that sense my arguments should not

in their broad outline seem particularly surprising. Some scholars do indeed fall strongly on the "novelistic" or "anti-novelistic" side of the divide. For example, scholarship primarily focused on the Christian material has often commented on the affinities and differences between novels and apocryphal acts in order to make an argument for the readership of these texts, and so to make judgements about the character of early Christian society, either stressing that they were aimed at an educated audience (like the novels), or to stress that they were aimed at a low-status audience (like the novels—taking one's pick in debates over the sociology of Greco-Roman prose fiction).[1] In both cases there is often an assumption that they were hoping to appeal to the taste of the Roman Empire's novel-readers, attaching themselves to the coat-tails of the novel's popularity.[2] Alternatively some have stressed radical differences between the two forms—for example emphasizing the way in which early Christian fiction may have been linked to particular communities, or may have arisen from oral or "folk" tradi-

[1] See Cameron (1991) 107–108: "The many scholars who stress the incorporation of 'romance' motifs and the like are usually also importing a view of the literary level of the ancient novel that needs to be defended". It is important to stress, of course, that there is considerable variation within the corpus of apocryphal acts. For example, both *AAMt* and *ATh* are usually judged to be less ambitious in stylistic terms, and so further from sophisticated novelists like Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, than most of the other surviving acts (see Warren (1999) and further discussion in n. 9, below); my argument here is that we should not for that reason discount the possibility that they are able to make use of ambitious narrative techniques of intertwining form and content.

[2] For arguments which on the whole stress similarity, see Bremmer (2001); Pervo (1987) 122–131; Söder (1932). For a good example of the coat-tails theory (although within a discussion which argues, without much justification or acknowledgement of the complexity of the judgement, for categorising the novels and the apocryphal acts separately), see Holzberg (1995) 22–23: "In his depiction of those of the apostles' experiences that resemble situations typical for the novel, St Luke clearly used a technique and style calculated to remind his audience of similar scenes in narrative fiction. He could then expect the type of reader most likely to have enjoyed such texts to be all the more willing to read his work. The anonymous authors of the various apocryphal *Acts*, which first appeared in the second century and were especially popular in the third, increased considerably the thematic similarities to 'secular' novels; they even introduced the love motif, albeit in a modified form. They thus undeniably created a new type of fictional prose narrative which can in a certain sense quite legitimately be labelled the 'early Christian novel'. However, they cannot be included in the genre 'ancient novel', because they represent more properly the beginnings of its reception and influence". For useful overview of other scholarship on this issue, see Cameron (1991) 90, n. 1 and Rhee (2005) 25–35. For an attempt to rethink the *direction* of influence between Greco-Roman and Christian prose narrative, see Bowersock (1994).

tions.[3] Most accounts, however, now stand somewhere between the two, acknowledging the similarities, but also suggesting an ultimate difference between them—following, amongst others, Averil Cameron, who sees early Christian fiction as ultimately different from the novels "in the matter of its relation to truth", because of its protreptic purpose, and because of the distinctive role of story-telling in early Christian culture.[4]

The accounts which interest me most are those which engage with the detailed texture of these works, accounts which give some sense of the acts' generic self-consciousness, some sense of the way in which they both reinforce and prompt reflection upon particular horizons of generic expectation through the processes of reading. Here, the motif most often and most convincingly discussed is that of quasi-romantic attachment between chaste heroine and apostle. Most commentators now see this as a complex and subversive relationship, rather than simply an attempt to tag on to the novels' popularity. For example, Kate Cooper writes as follows: "The narrative strategy of the *Acts of Andrew* and the other apocryphal acts borrows from and subverts the ideology of *erôs* and the city's regeneration that we have seen in the ancient novel"; "now the narrative begins to play havoc with the conventions of ancient romance, preserving them, as it were, by inversion"; "if the parallelism between the Apocryphal Acts and the ancient romances is intentional—and surely it must be—then the rejection of the romance's ideal of passionate marriage was also a response to the romance's call for renewal of the city".[5]

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[3] For more radical stress on difference, see Thomas (1999) and (2003): in her view the oral character of these texts make them quite different from the novels; also Davies (1980) and Burrus (1986) and (1987) on their origin in female communities, the latter stressing also folklore origins; for criticism of that position, see Kaestli (1986), disputing in particular Burrus' conclusions about female perspective and folk origins, although he accepts (129) the importance of caution in claiming direct influence between the novels and the Acts; Bovon and Junod (1986) who stress the importance of avoiding an oversimplified view of the apocryphal acts as a homogenous and straightforwardly prescriptive corpus: "they appear too equivocal to have been created by militant communities" (164).

[4] See Cameron (1991), esp. 117–119 (118 for this quotation); cf. Clark (1984) 153–170 for similar stress on the ultimately very different purpose of early Christian fiction, for all its surface veneer of similarity.

[5] Cooper (1996) 45–67 (45–46, 47 and 52 respectively for these quotations); for other discussion of Christian use of these romantic motifs, see Rhee (2005) 125–135; Lieu (2004) 204; Doody (1997) 73–77; Reardon (1991) 165–166; Hägg (1983) 154–165. For discussion of the subversiveness of the apocryphal acts in other areas (with reference

What I want to suggest in this chapter, however, is that there is still a tendency to understate the undertones of generic subversiveness for the apocryphal acts in general (even if no-one now mistakes it in the case of these romantic motifs in particular), and to miss one of the key means by which it finds expression. In what follows I want to explore the possibility that the apocryphal acts contain images and incidents within their narratives which offer self-reflexive prompts towards a far from cosy vision of the relationship between Greco-Roman and early Christian fiction. These texts, I suggest, ultimately go out of their way to parade their own differences of genre, and not only that but at times even their own invalidation and effacement of the novel genre, as well as their allegiance to it; if we are not careful we can miss the co-erciveness and even the violence of that gesture.[6]

2. *Resistant texts?*

In what sense, then, do *ATh*[7] and *AAMt*[8] conform to or resist novelistic norms? One way of answering that question, following the lead of the approaches outlined above, is to look for passages where the acts seem to be drawing on and adapting novelistic motifs. The romantic motifs already discussed are entirely absent in *AAMt*, indeed there is (unusually for a genre which is often thought to appeal particularly to a female audience) no sustained description of female characters at all. That absence reminds us that we should be cautious of over-generalising about the importance of these seduction motifs in the apocryphal acts

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to the behaviour of the apostles rather than to the texts' relationship with the novel genre), see Perkins (1994) 124–141; Brock (1999); and several of the chapters in Wimbush (ed.) (1997).

[6] For an example of the language of conflict and annexation in scholarship on early-Christian relations with Greco-Roman fiction, see Alexander (2005) 69–96, who argues that Pauls' journeys across the Mediterranean in the canonical Acts of the Apostles constitute an act of "narrative aggression", parasitic upon the Greece-centred travel motifs of the novels.

[7] For plot summary of *ATh*, see Appendix 1; my translations follow the text of Lipsius and Bonnet (1891), vol. 1, 99–291; full English translation in Elliott (1993) 447–511; the text itself is very insecure, and is found in many variant versions (as is also the case for *AAMt*); see also the edition of Klijn (2003), which refers primarily to the Syriac version of the text.

[8] For plot summary of *AAMt*, see Appendix 2; my translations follow the text of Lipsius and Bonnet (1891), vol. 1, 65–116; full English translation in Elliott (1993) 283–299; see also the edition of MacDonald (1990).

as a corpus—although we should also remember that the *AAMt* was probably often envisaged by ancient readers as part of the longer *Acts of Andrew* story-cycle where female characters and seduction motifs play an important role.[9] Nevertheless, those motifs play a significant part in *ATh*, where conversion is represented a number of times through the tropes of novelistic seduction, most obviously in the conversion of Mygdonia and the king's wife Tertia which lies at the heart of the second half of the text.[10] In addition there are several briefer examples. For example in 8–9 a Hebrew flute-girl at a banquet (to be discussed further below) cannot help gazing at Thomas, and finally comes to sit at his feet, declaring his status as an apostle of the Lord, in a passage reminiscent of scenes in the Greek novels where characters find it hard to conceal feelings of love in a convivial setting.[11] Another promising place to look for affinities with novelistic plot—relevant in this case to both texts—is in their shared obsession with ethnographic description and with miracles.[12] Both texts, moreover, conform, to precisely the motif discussed by David Konstan in this volume whereby travel to a

[9] That point stands even if we accept the argument that it is a much later addition to that text, rather than an integral part of it. Nevertheless, it is worth remembering that some of *AAMt's* oddities may stem from the fact that it has different origins from the "major" apocryphal acts (*Acts of Andrew, Acts of John, Acts of Peter, Acts of Paul, Acts of Thomas*: see Pervo (1994) 242 for that standard grouping; Elliott (1993) 512–533 for a collection of "minor acts"). Dennis MacDonald's argument that *AAMt* was originally the opening section of the longer *Acts of Andrew* is generally now rejected on stylistic grounds: the style is generally less sophisticated than that of the *Acts of Andrew* and the other four, and that simplicity is widely taken to show that it was composed for a less educated audience. It is conceivable that the *AAMt* may be a much later text than those others. There are even signs, from certain oddities in the Greek, that it may be a translation from Syriac (although it is not unique in that if so—the same may have been the case at least in part for the *ATh*, which similarly stands out from the other apocryphal acts through its use of material distinctive to eastern Christianity: see Klijn (2003), esp. 3–4 and 8–9 for summary of the complex relationship between the Greek and Syriac texts). For debate about these issues for the *AAMt*, see MacDonald (1986a), with response by Prieur (1986) and counter-response by MacDonald (1986b); and for linguistic evidence, see Warren (1999) and Zachariades-Holmberg (1999).

[10] See Rhee (2005) 129–130.

[11] E.g., see Heliodorus, *Aithiopika* 3.11; Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon* 1.5.3 and 5.13.3; Sesonchosis fragment *POxy*. 3319 (col. 3, 17–23); *Apollonius King of Tyre* 17; Chariton's *Chaireas and Callirhoe* 2.4 and 4.5.

[12] The areas just discussed—romance, teratology (representation of extraordinary events, including miracles) and travel—are three of the five themes Söder (1932) influentially identified as shared between the apocryphal acts and the novels; the other two (both also relevant to *AAMt* and *ATh*) are aretalogy (description of the hero's extraordinary powers and teaching or moralising speech-making).

strange land is accompanied by healing and transformation of that society (although that obvious difference is that the apostles' work is never done: in contrast with, say, Heliodorus, individual acts of conversion are often followed immediately by new journeys and new challenges of conversion).[13] One other related motif, which is important especially in the *AAMt* and which is closely linked there with ethnographic character, is the theme of grotesque eating and drinking. Grotesque consumption is a common theme of the novels too—we might think in particular of the recurring inserted tales and images of cannibalistic eating in Apuleius and Achilles Tatius, and its importance as a motif in Petronius.[14]

In terms of plot, then, we find a familiar picture: common novelistic motifs, ingeniously adapted for Christian uses, and presumably appealing to an audience for whom they were familiar. Nevertheless there are, I suggest, moments where that relationship becomes a little more discordant, where these texts advertise features which would look quite alien by the standards of most of the ancient novels, and indeed go out of their way to stress their own exclusively Christian character. Most obviously, there are a number of moments where the language of Christian ritual bursts quite intrusively into quasi-novelistic narrative, for example through the inclusion of prayers or hymns. That is most obvious for the *ATh*, which includes long and enigmatic hymn texts in a number of places, most famously in the much-debated Hymn of the Pearl in *ATh* 108–113.[15] There are similar (if less lengthy) moments in *AAMt*. For example, the end of that text shares the interest in resolution and celebration which is central to all of the five main surviving Greek novels. But the very final words (although once again we should acknowledge that this account may sometimes have been viewed as part of a wider text) also parade their own status as a very distinctively Christian kind of utterance:

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[13] E.g., see *AAMt* 33; *ATh* 30.

[14] On Achilles Tatius, see Morales (2004) 50 and 165–172; on Petronius, Rimell (2002), esp. 176–181.

[15] Of other examples, the most lengthy are at *ATh* 6–7 (discussed further below), 27 and 50; the last two examples are prayers accompanying baptism and eucharist respectively; for discussion of the significance of the Hymn of the Pearl, see, amongst many others, Klijn (1960) and Ferreira (2002); and cf. Johnson (1999) on the prevalence of ritual language in the *ATh*—although also pointing out that the text flirts with the magical overtones of some of Thomas's language, and in that sense has something in common with the language used by the ambiguous sages of Greek fiction; Attridge (1997) on the way in which the Greek text of the *ATh* is saturated with allusions to the Gospels (whereas the Syriac text gives more attention to Old Testament references).

> One is the God of Andrew, one is the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power for all eternity. Amen. (εἷς θεὸς Ἀνδρέου, εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ᾧ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. ἀμήν) (*AAMt* 33)

That sentence gives ritual connotations not just to the praise uttered by the Myrmidonians, but perhaps also to the text itself: the word "Amen" is its final word. In the same breath as stating the separateness of Christian identity—"One is the god of Andrew"—the text also enacts its own generic separateness.

Elsewhere both texts seem to go out of their way to mark out their participation in the category of "acts literature" as a distinctive genre in its own right. Most strikingly, both texts begin with a scene of apostolic lot-drawing. The opening of *AAMt* reads as follows:[16]

> At that time, all the apostles were gathered together in the same place, and they distributed the regions of the world between themselves, throwing lots with the intention that each of them should go to the part he was allotted. The lot fell on Matthias to go to the city of the cannibals. (κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν ἦσαν πάντες οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συναχθέντες καὶ ἐμέριζον ἑαυτοῖς τὰς χώρας, βάλλοντες κλήρους ὅπως ἀπέλθῃ ἕκαστος εἰς τὸ λαχὸν αὐτοῦ μέρος. κατὰ κλῆρον οὖν ἔλαχεν τὸν Ματθείαν πορευθῆναι εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν ἀνθρωποφάγων) (*AAMt* 1)

It is a motif which stands in contrast with the openings of the romantic novels, where the wanderings of hero and heroine are random and unintentional (even if there is sometimes a shadowy sense of divine purpose in the background). And it stresses immediately that Matthias is one apostle amongst many, just as the text itself is one apostle text amongst many others. Thus both the beginning and the ending of *AAMt* are marked out as quite different from the Greco-Roman novels.

3. *Consumption and self-reflexiveness*

The danger in approaches of that sort, however, is that they might lead us back into an excessively simplistic model which attempts to quantify the degree of novelistic or anti-novelistic character of these texts at different moments. I have suggested already that if we want to move beyond that kind of approach we need to be more alert to the possibility that these texts are often self-conscious about their own

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[16] On this motif elsewhere, see Elliott (1993) 513, with reference to the *Acts of Thomas*, the *Martyrium Prius* and the *Acts of Philip*; MacDonald (1994) 38–39.

generic affiliations. I want in this section to explore the possibility that the apocryphal acts often include images and incidents which have self-reflexive implications, prompting us to ask questions about the literary relationships the text itself enacts. I look first at the theme of grotesque consumption already mentioned, before moving on the theme of ethnographic scrutiny in section four.

Is it possible in the *AAMt*, for example, that the imagery of cannibalism has some self-reflexive implications for how we understand the text and its own generic affiliations?[17] It is fairly commonplace now to point out that inserted images and incidents in the Greco-Roman novels—and especially images of bizarre mixture or consumption or incorporation—can offer images against which we are invited to measure up the texts themselves and their relation to other texts. Daniel Selden has argued that the thematic obsession with things which combine two identities in one is an image for the novels' hybrid generic identities;[18] Victoria Rimell has written about the theme of cannibalism in Petronius as a figure for the text's parasitical relationship with its readers;[19] the metamorphosed bodies of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* parallel the text's own metamorphic status, with its shift from Greek to Latin, and its abrupt changes of identity and speaking voice.[20] Looking beyond the novels, Emily Gowers has drawn out at length the self-reflexive impact of descriptions of food in Latin poetry.[21] Maggie Kilgour, and others following her, have shown how images of cannibalism can often be used in fiction amongst many other things as figures for textual consumption:

> The Novel deals consistently in its stories and tropes with the difficulty of being an "individual" without being detached from others, or ingested by them, or consuming them. But in its own cannibalizing of other texts, the Novel *plays* with incorporation . . .[22]

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[17] For a rather different perspective on the self-reflexiveness of the apocryphal acts, see Cameron (1991) 94–96, who sees their preoccupation with different kinds of speech as a feature which prompts us to reflect on their own communicative functions; and cf. König (2007) for a similar argument for the Greek novels, with reference to Xenophon of Ephesus.

[18] Selden (1994).

[19] Rimell (2002).

[20] See König (2008); and for self-reflexive representation of consumption in Apuleius, see Heath (1982) who argues for a connection between frustration of appetite and frustration of the desire for narrative closure.

[21] Gowers (1993).

[22] Doody (1997) 424–425, with reference to Kilgour (1990).

Against that background, we might expect the theme of incorporation in the *AAMt* to have a similar significance.

At this point it seems worthwhile to step back and review the functions of the cannibalism scene in this text more broadly: I return to the questions of genre and self-reflexive import towards the end of the section. Gerlinde Hüber-Rebenich sees this aspect of the *AAMt* as a sign of the text's commitment to providing sensationalistic entertainment, and characterises that as a "novelistic" trait.[23] Certainly the central scenes of the text are compellingly gory: they contain, for example, a description of the Myrmidonians' blood-extracting machine ("An earthen oven had been built in the middle of the city, and attached within the oven was a large trough; here they used to execute people, and their blood would run into the trough, and they would drain the blood and drink it" (22)); a moment where an old man (on the point of being killed in order to satisfy the city's need for blood because Andrew has helped the prisoners who would otherwise have been killed to escape) offers his children as food in his place, and is accepted (23); and intricate descriptions of the tortures inflicted on Andrew ("Let us go, attach a rope around his neck, and drag him through all the streets and alleys of the city every day until his death; and when he has died, let us divide up his body for all of the citizens and give it out to them for food" (25)).

However, I think there must be more to say about the function of grotesque detail in this text beyond its entertainment value. Early Christian fiction shares with the novels an interest in flirting with low status, risking an association between high-status hero/heroine and low-status defilements and degradations, while also generally refraining from endorsing or acknowledging that identification in full. Geoffrey Harpham, attempting to define the concept of the grotesque, writes that "most grotesques are marked by ... an affinity/antagonism, by the co-presence of the normative, fully formed, 'high' or ideal and the abnormal, unformed, degenerate, 'low' or material".[24] That formulation seems to me to be relevant both to the novels and to the apocryphal acts. The function of that play with grotesquerie (as Harpham characterises it) in the novels is very hard to generalise about, and is not my main concern here, but one might argue that one of its key functions is to unsettle conventional views of elite selfhood. Early Christian fiction shares that same fascination with the grotesque, although it puts

[23] Hüber-Rebenich (1999).
[24] Harpham (1982) 11.

it to very different work. Harpham is once again useful here. One of his other key claims is that the grotesque appeals in part through its capacity to open up a space for perception of the indescribable, paradoxical, almost unimaginable elements of the sacred. On that model, the grotesqueries of Christian fiction are more than just sensationalistic entertainment; in addition they help to open up a space in the reader's imagination for the risky, paradoxical features of Christian identity. By that argument, the apocryphal acts push further this fundamental tension in the novels—the paradoxical juxtaposition of high and low status—putting it to new uses and parading it in even more uncompromising terms.

There is space to explore only one example, that is the scene of the punishment and then conversion of the Myrmidonians. Andrew and Matthias have throughout the text urgently separated themselves off from the cannibals. But in these final pages it becomes clear that Christian identity is being characterised itself in cannibalistic terms—associating itself paradoxically with the horrifying habits of the Myrmidonians—in ways which might potentially seem rather risky. That strategy is in line with the rather double-edged response of Christian apologists to accusations of cannibalism made against them: their responses routinely attempt to turn the same accusation back against pagan religion, while also, at the same time, flirting with the possibility that Christianity may have cannibalistic overtones after all, at least in some metaphorical sense, as a way of parading its transgressiveness. The *AAMt* repeats that pattern in fictionalised terms.[25] We join the narrative at the moment when the tables have finally been turned. Andrew conjures up a flood of flesh-consuming water. For a moment it looks as though they might escape, but Andrew asks Jesus to block the ways out of the city by a wall of fire, and the cannibals are trapped: "the water rose up to cover the land, and it was bitter and consumed the flesh of the people" (29). Andrew, it seems, has ensured their destruction, punishing them justly for their wickedness. A moment later, however,

[25] MacDonald (1994) 37–38 and 317 plausibly but inconclusively uses the link with apologetic discussions of cannibalism to date the text to the third century, after which these accusations become much less common; however for a much later, similar story of Christians threatened by and ultimately triumphing over cannibalism, see the *Panegyric on Macarius* (Johnson (ed.) (1990) 21–30), which is tentatively dateable to the sixth century. For a good overview of accusations of cannibalism by and against Christians, see McGowan (1999); for Christian appropriation of images of cannibalism see most famously the *Gospel of John* 6.53–66, with Feeley-Harnik (1994) 66–67.

everything has changed. The inhabitants of the city plead for mercy and proclaim their belief in Andrew's god. The waters recede and they are spared; not only that, but in the closing paragraphs of the work we see them being received—consumed—into the Christian community. The move from one type of consumption to the other, from punishment to redemption, should of course not surprise us, given the central and paradoxical message of forgiveness and inclusiveness at the heart of Christian faith. But that does not make it any less extraordinary an ending. For a while it looks as though the city's salvation will be partial: all those who had died in the water are revived, but the old man who had offered his children, along with the city's executioners, is plunged down to the tortures of Hades. In the final lines of the text, however, we find that even these are not beyond salvation, since Jesus instructs Andrew to return to the city soon, after going to preach in the city of the barbarians, and to bring them up from the abyss. The cannibals' abrupt move from unknowable otherness to compatibility emphasizes the paradoxical nature of processes of Christian incorporation, Christianity's capacity to welcome the grotesque and the alien into itself and transform it.

Not only does Christianity cannibalise the cannibals, but the cannibals in turn themselves continue to cannibalise Andrew, consuming him metaphorically. In 28, on the second occasion of being dragged through the streets, Andrew's drops of blood were transformed to a fruit-bearing tree. The possibility, implied by that metamorphosis, of a divinely sanctioned edibility for human flesh is picked up in two images in the final paragraphs of the work. In 32, when Andrew proposes to leave them so that he can return to his disciples, they beg him to stay longer: "'We beg you', they all implored, 'stay with us a few days, so that we might be satiated from your fountain (ὅπως κορεσθῶμεν τῆς σῆς πηγῆς), because we are new converts'". And then in 33 Jesus in his final instructions to Andrew endorses their request: "Andrew, why do you go away leaving them fruitless (ἔασας αὐτοὺς ἀκάρπους) ..." Here the fountains of blood spilled in Andrew's torture are transformed to the fountains of divine knowledge which flow from him, and the fruit of his blood is a metaphor for his instruction and his help to the converted city. This reshaping of the earlier imagery of cannibalism is of course a sign, once again, of Christianity's capacity to take on negative, pagan images and transform and sanctify them, putting them to new service within the Christian faith. And yet it is hard to suppress the grotesqueness of these images, their potential to be contaminated by the horrors

which have come before. The narrative deliberately confronts us with that unsettling connection, as if to emphasize the enormity of the paradox involved in Christian transformation of the profane.

What, though, does all of this have to do with genre, beyond showing us that the *AAMt* has a very broad affinity with the novels, sharing an interest in grotesque and sensationalistic portrayal of eating and of the human body in a way which reveals the ambiguities and complexities inherent in notions of high status? One answer is that Christian incorporation and making-safe of the grotesqueries of cannibalism is paralleled by the text itself, which contains and "makes safe" sensationalistic details within its sacred framework. But that in itself does not get us very much further towards understanding the *AAMt*'s relation with non-Christian fiction.

As a way of pushing that question a little further I want therefore to return to the question of self-reflexiveness. Should we see the theme of incorporation in the *AAMt* as a phenomenon which articulates a sense of the work's own self-image? Does it, for example, buttress the impression I outlined in the previous section that the apocryphal acts are at least sometimes keen to advertise themselves as texts which resist being absorbed into the wider stream of Greco-Roman fiction, advertising their separateness from it and their aggressive rewriting of it? Certainly the early part of the work thematises the apostles' resistance to incorporation. Matthias' eyes are gouged out when he is first imprisoned, like the eyes of all the other prisoners, but he refuses to eat the grass which they are fed, and which contributes to their representation as bestial; he also prays that the magic forgetfulness potion will have no effect on him, and his prayer is granted. Later, Christianity does mingle with Myrmidon identity, in the scenes already discussed—but only when the mingling is on its own terms, when it can swallow up the old Myrmidon identity entirely, effacing it, so that only traces of it remain. My hypothesis here is simply that this mixture of standoffishness and aggression is mirrored by the tension in the work's own attitude to other fictional traditions: we might see it as asserting its own autonomy, its own separateness—for example in the strongly marked acts-like/Christian character of the opening and closing sentences; or alternatively we might view it as a text which has swallowed up its non-Christian counterparts, cannibalising and effacing them, or else annexing them, in the same unsubtle, uncompromising style implied by the apostles' initial allocation of territory by lot (an allocation which it itself implicitly linked with the activity of the cannibals, who are similarly

interested in the act of division, for example in their plan to "divide" Andrew's flesh after his death, quoted above from *AAMt* 25). If that were right it would give us a really quite aggressive image of the relation between Christian and non-Christian fiction, far removed from the much cosier model of imitation mentioned at the start of this paper.

Alternatively one might see the relationship not simply as a relationship with Greco-Roman prose fiction specifically, but with Greco-Roman literature more widely. Dennis MacDonald has argued that the *AAMt*, along with the *AA*, is as an extended imitation and rewriting of the *Odyssey*.[26] Certainly it seems hard to avoid the conclusion that there is some relation—albeit a very peculiar one, which has an estranging effect on the original, transformed to something utterly unfamiliar, and rarely signalled through specific reminiscence (MacDonald overemphasizes, to my mind, the verbal parallels). That odd estranging effect in the text's replaying of the *Odyssey* is certainly compatible with the model of cannibalistic incorporation, with its capacity to efface the original. The text, in other words, swallows up and contains the *Odyssey*, but it does so only on its own terms—i.e. in the same way as Christian faith swallows up the Myrmidonians—in a way which leaves only traces of the original.

Admittedly that model is very hard to pin down in any particular moment of the text, and it is much harder to see the apocryphal acts as intricately self-reflexive texts by comparison with authors like Apuleius, whose work is so full of images of narrative communication and interpretation, which prompt us to think about own relationship with the narrative as readers.[27] But it may sound like a rather less extravagant claim if it is rephrased. I am not arguing that the author includes these descriptions of cannibalism in order to offer us carefully crafted, self-reflexive keys to interpreting his relationship with Greco-Roman fiction—but rather the other way round: this is a text which is amongst other things about the paradoxes of Christian identity, its separateness from pagan society but also paradoxically its capacity to incorporate that society. The elaborate cannibalism descriptions are included in part as an extravagant, fictionalised, deliberately unrealistic

[26] MacDonald (1994); as noted above (n. 9) the claim about links with the *AA* are widely disputed, but rejecting that claim need not mean rejecting the idea that the *AAMt* shows some engagement with the *Odyssey* in its own right.

[27] Although see n. 16, above, for the argument that the apocryphal acts share some of that self-reflexive interest in communication.

image of that powerful and (for its readers) very real process. What I am suggesting is that the author may also be attempting—perhaps only half consciously—to align her or his own authorial voice and textual identity with that same model, groping for a form of expression which is both stand-offish from and incorporative of the various non-Christian alternatives available to her or him.[28]

Are there signs of similar processes at work in the other apocryphal acts which help to back up that impression? Certainly it does not take much to see that these same motifs of stand-offishness on the one hand and swallowing-up on the other are a repeated feature of the apocryphal acts: ravenous beasts and recalcitrant apostles are everywhere. Here I want just to take a brief look at the *Acts of Thomas* in order to offer a first step in that exploration. The reason why the *Acts of Thomas* seem particularly helpful here is that instances of incorporation or resistance to incorporation in this text are often accompanied, I suggest, by signs of very abrupt disruption or overwriting of familiar narrative patterns.

I give two examples. Neither is strongly marked as an example of resistance to the "novel" genre specifically—what they have in common, instead, is the way in which they enact a kind of resistance or intrusiveness in relation to narrative momentum more generally, showing a taste for abrupt reversal or change of direction. The first comes early in the text. The apostle Thomas has been sold by the Lord as a slave to a merchant, and is being taken back to India with him. They stop at a city where a feast is in progress, with punishments decreed for those who refuse to attend; Thomas and the merchant go to the feast. Throughout the feast Thomas's oddity or foreignness is marked. He refuses to eat, announcing that he has "come because of something greater than food or even drink". He is struck by one of the cupbearers and prophesies that the hand which has struck him will be dragged by a dog; accordingly the cupbearer is killed by a lion while fetching water, and his hand brought into the dining-hall by a dog. Most importantly, however, Thomas's outsider status, his refusal of the temporary incorporation into the citizen body which would be expected of a foreign visitor at a feast (once again, as for Matthias in *AAMt*, refusal to

[28] Krueger (2004) makes similar claims for the interrelation of form and content for hagiographical writing, suggesting, for example (94–109) that hagiographical writers regularly represent writing as an ascetic practice, measuring up their own self-presentation and stylistic disciplines against those of their saintly subjects.

eat marks a separateness of identity) is marked by his use of language, especially when he sings a hymn in Hebrew (*ATh* 6–7), understood only by a Hebrew flute-girl who happens to be present. As already suggested in section two, the song not only marks his resistance to incorporation in the world of the narrative, it also marks the text's own refusal of incorporation into the norms of Greco-Roman fiction, and indeed the norms of sympotic discussion which the text momentarily promises to reproduce in the interrogation of Thomas by his fellow diners. This puzzling hymn is not reproduced in Hebrew, but is nevertheless alien to the traditions of the Greek or Latin novel, marking its Christian and non-novelistic character. That alienness is made clear not only by its language, but also by the fact that it has no immediately obvious relationship with the sympotic action around it, setting a puzzle both for Thomas's fellow-diners and for us as readers.[29] It is as if the text itself is helping to articulate a sense of Thomas's mysterious and threatening separateness precisely through its own alien form at this point, paralleling his own refusal to consume and be consumed by its own generic disruptiveness. Over and over again, in fact, throughout the work, Thomas's acts of conversion, which are themselves represented as interruptions of the normal workings of pagan society and romantic plot, culminate in unmistakeably Christian, ritual language quite alien to the novel tradition.

My second example is again concerned with eating. In *ATh* 31, Thomas, with his companions, comes across the body of a young man, lying in the countryside. He prays, and a vast serpent appears, "beating its head and shaking its tail on the ground".[30] The snake explains that it was in love with a woman, saw her having sex with the man, and then killed him later in the evening. It goes on to recount its past deeds, in the garden of Eden and elsewhere, boasting of the people it has led astray. Thomas then commands it to suck out the poison from the man:

[29] There is, admittedly, a parallel in Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon* 1.5.5, where a song is sung about Apollo's pursuit of Daphne, but in a sense that comparison only makes the alienness of the hymn in the *ATh* all the more obvious: it is not the fact of singing in itself which makes Thomas's hymn stand out, but rather its failure to conform to any of the models available for sympotic song within the Greco-Roman tradition, flaunting its rejection and transformation of the erotic themes one would expect in such a context, and deliberately making itself inaccessible, through its language, to Thomas's fellow-diners, in a way which flouts the inclusive norms of sympotic fellowship.

[30] On this scene, see Adamik (2001).

> And the snake came up and put his mouth to the wound of the young man, and sucked out the bile from it. And in a short time, the colour of the young man, which was like purple to start with, began to grow white, whereas the snake swelled up. And when the snake had drained all the bile into itself, the young man jumped up and stood on his feet, and running over fell at the feet of the apostle. But the serpent, having swollen up, burst apart and died, and his poison and bile poured out. And in the place where the poison was poured out there was a great chasm, and that serpent was swallowed up into it. And the apostle said to the king and to his brother, "Send workmen, and fill up that place and lay foundations and build houses above it, to make a house of hospitality for strangers". (*ATh* 33)

Here, as for the *AAMt*, the destroyer is destroyed, the apostle resists the threat of incorporation, and incorporates the serpent in turn, although in a way which utterly effaces its former identity, in the foundations of his houses for strangers. That pattern of Christian victory is of course familiar. What makes this passage stand out, I suggest, is simply the way in which the apostle's resistance to and victory over the serpent is mirrored in the text's resistance to its own narrative momentum. That is not to say that it is entirely unexpected to see the turnaround: frustration of expected plot direction, and indeed recovery from apparent death, is of course common in both the Greco-Roman novels and in the apocryphal acts. Nevertheless the text's unravelling of its own structure is, I think, particularly blatant here, as Thomas quite literally rewinds the story at speed, replacing it and overwriting it with a very different one. My suggestion, once again, is that the apocryphal acts share with much of Greek and Roman literature an awareness of the capacity for scenes of consumption to prompt reflection on and to be echoed by a text's sense of its own shape and its own generic affiliation. In the first passage I discussed, Thomas' failure to conform—in the context of pagan conviviality—is matched by the narrative's failure to conform, it's introduction of alien material. In this second case, rather differently, Thomas's assertion of control over the snake (resisting and reversing the danger of serpentine consumption through the ploy of making the serpent swallow its own poison, and then in turn consuming the snake, metaphorically, within Christian culture) is matched by the author's assertion of control over the narrative (resisting and reversing the narrative's conventional momentum towards a sensationalistic portrait of death and gore, and consuming it in turn within a Christian storyline).

4. *Unobservant apostles?*

In order to back up these impressions of *AAMt* and *ATh* as self-reflexive texts, and in order to explore further the question of how the apocryphal acts represent their own closeness to and distance from pagan culture, I want to turn in this section, more briefly, to a rather different motif, that is the motif of ethnographic looking. Here too, I suggest, we see self-reflexive effects: the apostles' peculiarly disengaged attitude to the pagan cultures they encounter mirrors one prominent strand of the text's self-image, that it is a disengaged, standoffish attitude towards Greco-Roman literary norms, which stands in tension with the acts' indisputable imitation of novelistic qualities in some areas.

Some further expansion of that claim may be helpful. It is now a commonplace of scholarship on Greek ethnographical writing that one of the functions of the ethnographical gaze, in Herodotus and his many later imitators, is to turn attention back on to the Greek culture of the looker, exploring and also ultimately undermining or at least complicating assumptions about Greek cultural superiority. From a rather different perspective,[31] Richard Hunter has argued elsewhere that the much Greco-Roman fiction is fascinated by scenes of marginal characters looking curiously at high culture; and that the novels also appeal consistently to their reader's curiosity, in a way which paints the processes of novelistic reading and writing as self-consciously marginal, voyeuristic activities, gazing on high culture from the outside.[32] My suggestion here is that the *AAMt* and the *ATh* may similarly be using the motif of looking to articulate a sense of their own relationship with pagan culture, but in a way which works rather differently from the two models just outlined.

To be more specific: in both texts, for all their replication of ethnographical scenarios, there is very little, at least in the action of the characters, which resembles ethnographic curiosity or the kind of voyeuristic, novelistic curiosity just described. The apostles themselves, at any rate, seem to be strikingly lacking in any such interest. The language of sensationalistic ethnographical observation comes from the narrating voice, not from the apostles. The looking of the apostles is much more focused, in a sense much more functional: the kind of gaze which

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[31] See esp. Hartog (1988) and Munson (2001).
[32] Hunter (forthcoming).

seems to be utterly confident of the centrality of the Christian faith, utterly unwilling to be changed by the encounter with an alien culture or to search for common ground with it (even if Christianity ultimately is shown to have something in common with the pagan cultures it absorbs, as in the closing scenes of conversion-as-incorporation already discussed for *AAMt*). In that sense it stands in contrast with the long-standing ethnographical tradition in Greek literature, which of course feeds into the Greek novel, whereby looking at alien culture is a way of reinforcing, reflecting on and sometimes throwing doubt upon one's own;[33] and also with the novelistic styles of looking just described, where looking at high culture is a way of expressing a subversive sense of marginality.

Let us look first, briefly, at the *ATh*. I take just one example, from the passage already discussed, near to the very beginning of the work. Thomas and his master arrive in the city of Andrapolis, and are confronted with the spectacle of the city celebrating a marriage festival. The scene of public feasting, with the invitation to all citizens and even foreign visitors, replicates the standard scene of festivals for the pagan gods in the Greek cities of the Roman Empire, where public feasting is an opportunity to put the identity of the whole city on show, although that familiar scene is given a sinister edge by the claim that anyone who refuses to come will be "answerable to the king" (4), a detail which paints pagan communality as co-ercive, in contrast with the voluntary membership of the Christian faith, and so makes Thomas's refusal to integrate himself into the feast and to play along with local custom all the more daring. Thomas does admittedly have some vestige of ethnographic curiosity in his initial question about the festival on arrival: "Leaving the ship they went into the city. And behold the sounds of flute-players and water-organs and trumpets were echoing around them. And the apostle inquired saying, 'What is this festival going on in the city?'" (4). From then on, however, he is increasingly inscrutable: he asks no more questions, and the narrative gives us no direct access to his thoughts; he is depicted as having no inclination to gaze himself or indeed to expose his other senses to new experiences:

[33] For discussion of the great range of uses of ethnographic conventions in early Christian writing, see Lieu (2004) esp. 269–297, although on the whole she stresses an intensification of the strategies of ethnographic denigration of the other, rather than anything quite resembling the complete neglect of ethnographic engagement identified here.

> And the apostle, seeing them all reclining, reclined himself also amongst them; and they all stared at him as at a stranger, as someone who had come from a foreign land … And while they were eating and drinking the apostle tasted nothing. (4–5)

The detail of Thomas averting his eyes is repeated again later in 6, indeed it seems to be the thing that provokes the cupbearer to hit him (although the narrative does not specify a causal relationship unequivocally), and he raises his eyes only to pronounce his prediction of the punishment the cupbearer will face. At the same time, after he has sung the Hymn of the Pearl, Thomas is himself increasingly the object of other people's looking. Most of the diners look at Thomas with wonder and bewilderment. The flute-girl, by contrast, looks at him admiringly, but without her gaze being returned: "leaving him she played to the others, but kept looking back and gazing at him; for she loved him very much, being a man of the same race as herself; and he was beautiful in appearance beyond all the others who were there. And when the flute girl had finished her flute-playing, she sat down opposite him, looking at him and staring at him. But he looked at no-one at all, nor did he pay attention to anyone, keeping his eyes only on the ground, waiting until he could leave" (8).[34]

Thomas, then, is the object of looking, but pointedly averts his own eyes. That pose of course reveals Thomas's humility and his lack of interest in worldly pleasures, marked by his refusal to reciprocate the quasi-erotic gaze of the flute-girl. But it also has implications for his own cultural self-positioning. On one level, of course, it accentuates his marginality, drawing attention to his anomalous status at the banquet. But in another sense it acts as an expression of the centrality of his own culture, proclaiming a lack of interest in scrutinizing and learning from the society he encounters, so confident does he seem to be in his own Christian identity.

[34] The theme of looking is also prominent in the hymn Thomas sings at 6–7, which describes a beautiful bride and bridegroom, both of whom are objects of admiration ("delightful is the sight of her" (6); "[the bridesmaids] keep their gaze and their sight on the bridegroom, in order that they may be lit up by the sight of him" (7)); if the bride and bridegroom stand for Christ and his church (although the precise significance of the allegory is debated, and the Syriac version is rather different) that has obvious implications for the representation of viewing in the main narrative: the proper object of Thomas's gaze, and the reason for his lack of interest in viewing what is around him, is a focus on the divine.

The *AAMt* shares that same theme of apostolic incuriosity. The most striking example comes in 22: "After Andrew left the prison, he walked about the city, and by a certain street he saw a pillar with a copper statue standing on it. He sat behind the pillar in order to see what would happen". Here we seem to have the apostle assuming the pose of a curious onlooker, a voyeur or eavesdropper ready to gaze on the unspeakable horrors which are about to unfold. But a closer look at the text makes it clear that his gaze is much more disciplined and restricted than that. The executioners lead out their prisoners and prepare to sacrifice, and then Andrew is prompted by the Lord to intervene: "And as the executioners were lifting their hands over them, Andrew heard a voice saying, 'See, Andrew, what is happening in this city'. And having looked, Andrew prayed to the Lord, saying, 'Lord Jesus Christ, you who ordered me to enter into this city, do not let the people in this city do anything harmful, but let the swords fall from their lawless hands'. Immediately the swords fell from the hands of the executioners and their hands were turned to stone". Andrew's gaze is not, it seems, an ethnographical or voyeuristic gaze after all. For one thing there is now mention of the satisfaction or further arousal of his curiosity. Not only that, but it is clear that his looking is beyond his control: he looks only when he is prompted and allowed to look by the Lord's intervention; his looking is an entirely functional tool, dedicated to the accomplishment of God's will, whose inevitability is made clear by the repetition of the phrase about the falling of the swords, no sooner requested than accomplished.[35]

None of that is meant to suggest that the work itself is devoid of ethnographic fascination. Indeed it is hard to think of any other example in ancient Greek literature which quite matches the bloodthirsty horror of the cannibalism scenes in the centre of the city. That disjunction between the utterly incurious gaze of the apostles, and the ethnographic thrill we potentially feel as readers is perhaps the whole point.

[35] For a similar example, see *AAMt* 2–3, where Matthias prays to the Lord to have his sight restored to him after blinding: "Provide for me, Lord, the sight of my eyes, in order that I might be able to see what they are attempting against me, the sinful men in this city"; at first sight we might expect that he is motivated partly by curiosity (especially given the ethnographic overtones of the description of the cannibals' brutality with which the work opens), but on reflection his motives seem more pragmatic, not least when he chooses to close his eyes in 3 to disguise his regaining of sight, and it is certainly clear, as for Andrew in 22, that the gift of sight is entirely under the Lord's control.

The ethnographical fascination comes, as I have said, from the narrating voice in the work. Can we resist that voice as we read, can we look on the city of the cannibals as the apostles look on it, with that utterly focused viewpoint, completely confident of its own centrality? Or are we unable to throw off our own novelistic way of reading? In that sense the text is indeed advertising precisely its own distance from "fringe" status: it is confident in Christian cultural superiority and centrality. But it also challenges us to replicate that confidence, to ask ourselves self-consciously if we can align ourselves with the unobservant apostles. Can we leave behind novelistic curiosity as they have done? And can we share the confidence about the dominance of Christian culture which that incuriosity implies?

5. *Conclusions*

My primary aim in this chapter has been to argue that both *AAMt* and *ATh* have a more nuanced sense of self-reflexiveness than they are usually given credit for. For some reason the concept of self-reflexiveness—the idea that the textual self-definition of a text may be paralleled by, and articulated through, repeated themes and motifs at the level of story—is still not often ascribed to the apocryphal acts, despite the fact that it is standardly ascribed to the novels, as even a glance over recent scholarship on Apuleius or Heliodorus makes clear.

But what does that have to do with their "novelistic" or "anti-novelistic" character? On one level their self-reflexiveness brings them closer to the Greek and Roman novels: this is yet another quality they share in common with those texts. But I have also suggested that it is one means by which the apocryphal acts often express a sense of ambivalence about their relationship with the norms of Greco-Roman fictional narrative, and with pagan culture more generally. I have explored two main themes: first, the apostles' resistance to the threats posed by pagan practices of consumption; and second, the apostles' practices of looking, which generally show little sign of interest in situating their own Christian culture in relation to the other cultures they encounter. In both of these cases, it is easy enough to see that the apostles are being themselves portrayed as standoffish from Greco-Roman culture as well as simultaneously aggressive towards it—confident in Christianity's ability to absorb and cannibalise within itself the alien cultures it converts, transforming them utterly. I have also

suggested, however, that the form of these texts often echoes that mixture of standoffishness and aggression: these are texts which project, at least some of the time, an impression of confidence in the separateness in their own generic affiliations, in their own capacity to incorporate and utterly transform the models they inherit from Greco-Roman narrative. In some cases, moreover—as in the example of Thomas's disruptive refusal to eat at the banquet, which is paralleled by the disruptive intrusion of his Hebrew hymn into a quasi-novelistic, quasi-sympotic scene—that sense of generic separateness becomes particularly prominent at moments when the two narrative themes identified above, of eating and looking, are under the spotlight.

I have also suggested, finally, that the *AAMt* offers a particularly sophisticated and ingenious version of that effect, by implying the potential for disjunction between the viewing of the apostles and the viewing of us as readers. It offers, in other words, access to two different models for our reading of the text. The first, modelled on the looking of the apostles, who have full confidence in their own separateness from the pagan cultures they encounter, views this text as something far removed from pagan narrative. The second, by contrast, views it within the template of Greco-Roman fiction, based as it is on the voyeuristic, sensationalistic conventions of Greco-Roman ethnography and novel-writing, which are temptingly laid before our eyes from the horrifying opening description of the city onwards. We are challenged to choose between a novelistic and an anti-novelistic, apostolic way of reading.

I should stress that in all of this I am not interested in bolstering the view that the apocryphal acts really do somehow stand *outside* the genre of "novel"; on the contrary, my inclination is towards a very fluid model of ancient prose fiction as a spectrum of different possibilities variously cross-fertilizing with each other. I have also tried to suggest, however, that that very fluid model of novelistic identity need not imply an entirely passive, inert, *laissez-faire* approach to genre, may not be incompatible with the claim that these texts have a degree of self-consciousness about their own generic identity, a tendency to try out poses of standoffishness or resistance or even aggression, held in tension with a more conciliatory acknowledgement of their own immersion in the shared streams of fictional narrative.

I should stress, too, that I am not suggesting that this effect is something exclusive to Christian literature. The "Greco-Roman novels", too, both thematise and enact a sense of resisting, reversing, cannibalising and overwriting what is "expected". Here we come up against one

particular problem of defining any work of ancient fiction as somehow outside the central "novel genre": whenever we characterise one text as standing "apart", that point can come to seem invalidated, on closer inspection, by the perception that all ancient fiction on some level prides itself on its resistance to canonical models, its apartness or marginality, its hybridity. Nevertheless my suggestion here is that the motifs of resistance and aggression, incorporation and resistance to incorporation, are playing a more ideologically blatant role in texts like *ATh* and *AAMt*, which draw on the anti-canonical nature of ancient fiction and direct it towards new, Christian purposes.

APPENDIX 1

Plot summary of the Acts of Thomas (adapted from Elliott [1993] 447)

1–3: The apostles draw lots to see where each of them will go; Judas Thomas draws India, and refuses to go; Jesus appears in a dream to the merchant Abban, telling him that Thomas is a carpenter, and offering to sell him as a slave; Thomas assents and is taken to India.

4–8: On the way they stop at the city of Andrapolis and join in with the city's feast in celebration of the marriage of the king's daughter; Thomas is a disruptive presence at the banquet and correctly predicts the imminent death of a cupbearer who strikes him.

9–16: The king, realising Thomas must be a man of god, asks him to bless his daughter and takes him to the bridal chamber; the bride and bridegroom are left alone in the bridal chamber, but Jesus appears to them in the guise of Thomas and succeeds in converting them to celibacy; Thomas continues his journey to India before the king can find him and punish him.

17–29: On arrival in India, Thomas meets King Gundaphoros, who commissions him to build a royal palace; Thomas distributes the money for the palace to the poor; the king is angry, but then changes his mind when he accepts that Thomas has built a palace for him not on earth but in heaven; Thomas celebrates the eucharist.

30–38: Thomas continues his journey. Raising of a man killed by a serpent.

39–41: A speaking colt persuades Thomas to ride on its back.

42–50: Exorcism of a woman possessed by a demon; Thomas celebrates the eucharist.

51–61: A woman murdered by her lover is raised from the dead; she recounts her vision of hell; Thomas continues his work of converting and preaching.

62–67: Siphor the captain of King Misdaios finds Thomas to ask him to exorcize his wife and daughter; Thomas agrees to visit them.

68–81: On the way, the animals drawing their wagon become tired; Thomas orders four wild asses to pull the wagon in their place; the wild asses deliver Thomas and the captain to his family; Thomas addresses and exorcizes the demons, with the help of one of the wild asses.

82–118: Mygdonia, the wife of Charisios, a kinsman of the king, is converted having heard Thomas preaching; she refuses to eat with Charisios or sleep with him; Charisios reacts by having the king agree to kill Thomas; Thomas is arrested; Siphor testifies on Thomas's behalf to the king; the Hymn of the Pearl is sung by Thomas in prison; Charisios pleads with his wife to change her behaviour.

119–133: Thomas, temporarily removed from the prison by divine intervention, baptises Mygdonia; he is interrogated by the king and released; both the king and Charisios plead with him to reconcile Mygdonia with her husband; Siphor and his wife are baptised; Thomas celebrates the eucharist.

134–138: King Misdaios' wife, Tertia, sent by Misdaios to dissuade Mygdonia from her stubbornness, is also converted; Misdaios has Thomas arrested again.

139–149: Misdaios' son Vazan is converted by Thomas in prison; Thomas is miraculously saved from torture; Thomas preaches in prison.

150–158: Vazan is baptised, along with his wife Mnesara and Tertia; Thomas celebrates the eucharist.

159–170 / 71: Misdaios accuses Thomas of sorcery and orders him to be taken to the mountain by soldiers and killed with spears; Thomas prays at length and the soldiers kill him; Misdaios is converted as a result of the healing of one of his sons after an appearance by Thomas.

APPENDIX 2

Plot summary of the Acts of Andrew and Matthias

1: The apostles draw lots to see where each of them will go; Matthias draws Myrmidonia, the city of the cannibals.

2–3: On arrival, he is captured, blinded, imprisoned with other prisoners, and given grass to fatten him up; he refuses to eat the grass, and his mind is unaffected by their forgetfulness-inducing drug. He prays, and Jesus promises to send Andrew to rescue him.

4: Jesus appears to Andrew and tells him to go to rescue Matthias.

5–15: Andrew and his disciples take passage the next day on a ship bound for Myrmidonia, crewed by Jesus and some angels in his disguise; Andrew spends much of the journey telling stories about Jesus' deeds, including a long account of his miraculous proof of his divinity in front of disbelieving high priests.

16–17: Andrew and his disciples are deposited on the shore in Myrmidonia, asleep; they realise that Jesus was the captain of the boat.

18: Jesus appears to Andrew as a young child, telling him to rescue Matthias and to stand firm in the face of the tortures he will receive.

19–21: Andrew goes to the prison; he prays and the guards fall dead; he frees Matthias and the other prisoners (248 men and 49 women).

22: Andrew goes out into the city; he hides behind a pillar and watches as the executioners discover the prison empty; they resolve first to eat the dead guards, and then to kill seven old men of the city on each day following; the dead guards are placed in the Myrmidonians' blood extracting machine in the middle of the city; the guards are about to butcher them, but Andrew prays and the swords of the executioners fall from their hands.

23: The Myrmidonians gather up the old people of the city and choose seven of them by lot; one of the old men chosen offers his children in place of himself; they are brought forward to be killed, but Andrew prays and the swords of the executioners once again fall from their hands.

24: The devil warns the Myrmidonians of Andrew's presence.

25–27: On the Lord's instruction Andrew reveals himself to the Myrmidonians; on the suggestion of the Devil they drag him through the streets; after two days of dragging, demons appear to Andrew in his cell, but are scared away.

28: On the third day of dragging Andrew prays for release from his suffering; the flesh and hair which have been scraped away from his body are transformed to fruit-bearing trees.

29: Back in the prison, Jesus heals Andrew of his wounds; Andrew prays, and a statue in the prison spews out flesh-devouring water.

30: The Myrmidonians attempt to flee but are hemmed in by a ring of fiery cloud and are starting to be devoured by the water; Andrew asks the statue to stop sending out the water; the Myrmidonians beg for mercy.

31: The old man who had handed over his children and the executioners are swallowed up into the earth.

32: Those who had died in the water are revived, and the Myrmidonians are baptised; Andrew resolves to leave, but the Myrmidonians beg him to stay.

33: Jesus appears to Andrew and tells him to stay for several days longer, and then later to return again to the city, after a trip to the city of the barbarians, in order to bring up the people who had been swallowed up into the abyss; Andrew therefore stays for another seven days teaching them; the Myrmidonians gather around him as he leaves, praising the Lord Jesus Christ.

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CHAPTER NINE

PAUSANIAS THE NOVELIST[1]

William Hutton

In 2001 Ewen Bowie published an interesting suggestion: that in writing *Daphnis and Chloe*, Longus was influenced by Pausanias the periegete, whose ten-volume topographical account of the Greek mainland, the *Description of Greece*, was produced in the same general period in which Longus' novel emerged.[2] The basis for Bowie's suggestion is the similarity of wording and thought in a pair of passages from the two works: In Longus, the intervention of Pan to save Chloe from her would-be captors, in Pausanias the intervention of Apollo to save his shrine at Delphi from marauding Gauls. Though it hardly does justice to the subtlety of Bowie's argument to present it this way, here are some examples of the comparisons he makes: In Longus, the *whole land* seemed to gleam with fire, and the *clash* of oars was heard (ἡ γῆ πᾶσα ἐδόκει λάμπεσθαι πυρί, κτύπος δὲ ἠκούετο … κωπῶν, 2.25.3); in Pausanias, the *whole land* shook and people thought they heard the *clash* of horses being driven. (ἥ τε γὰρ γῆ πᾶσα … ἐσείετο … ἐδόξαζόν … κτύπου … ἐλαυνομένων ἵππων ⟨αἰσθάνεσθαι⟩, 10.23.1–7). In Pausanias, the night brings on far more grievous events than those of the preceding day (τὰ δὲ ⟨ἐν⟩ τῇ νυκτὶ πολλῷ σφᾶς ἔμελλεν ἀλγεινότερα ἐπιλήψεσθαι, 10.23.4), in Longus a day arose that was much more frightful than the night it followed (… ἐπῆλθεν ἡμέρα πολὺ τῆς νυκτὸς φοβερωτέρα, 2.26.1).

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[1] I would like to thank Grammatiki Karla for the invitation to contribute an essay to this volume. I was not a participant in the seminar upon which it is based, but I was a member of the audience, and the argument of this paper is stronger as a result. Previous versions of this essay were presented to seminars at the Kyknos Center for ancient narrative at the University of Wales, Swansea, and to the department of Classical Philology of the University of Athens. I thank those present on both occasions for their helpful comments and suggestions. Also, Martha Jones read drafts of this paper and saved me from many errors. Any that remain are totally my own fault. Financial support was provided by a grant for international travel from the Reves Center at the College of William & Mary.

[2] Bowie (2001) 30–31.

According to Bowie, if one accepts these comparisons as evidence of contact (and Bowie himself admits there is room for skepticism), there are intriguing implications for both authors, and particularly for Longus. For instance, Bowie suggests that this connection with Pausanias gives us our firmest *terminus post quem* for *Daphnis and Chloe*, since Book X of the *Description of Greece* can be dated with some certainty to the environs of 180 CE.[3] Implicit in this inference, however, is the assumption that it is Longus who is following Pausanias. In fact, the opposite may be true: given the uncertainty as to the date of *Daphnis and Chloe*,[4] it is also possible that Pausanias wrote his description of events in Delphi with Longus's vivid and memorable passage in mind.

While it is unlikely that many would object to the notion that a fiction-writer like Longus would read factual literature like *The Descripton of Greece*, perhaps with the aim of heightening the verisimilitude of his writings, it is a somewhat harder pill to swallow to think that Pausanias, an author we rely on for all sorts of serious real-world information, would have any significant dependence on the novelists of his day. Seen through the lens of traditional scholarship, there seems to be an unbridgeable chasm between the world of the ancient novel and Pausanias: The novel is fictional; Pausanias deals with facts. The purpose of the novel is entertainment; Pausanias' purpose is information. The novel deals with the world of fantasy and romance; Pausanias deals with buildings and statues made of stone and metal, some of which we can still see and put our hands on today. Exacerbating this sense of division is the traditional view of the novel, on the one hand, as a frivolous genre, and of Pausanias, on the other, as a loner in the culture of his day, one who was interested in Classical rather than contemporary literature and whose own literary output seems to have "fail[ed] to find the audience he hoped for",[5] in that no other author refers to his work by name until the sixth century CE.[6]

The most recent scholarship on Pausanias, however, has tended to call such traditional view of Pausanias' isolation into question. Currently the list of contemporary and near-contemporary authors for whom a plausible argument has been advanced for a direct relation-

[3] On the dating of Pausanias' work, see Habicht (1985/^{2}1998) 9–13; Bowie (2001) 21–24.

[4] On the dating of Longus' work, see Hunter (1983) 6–8.

[5] Habicht (1985) 22.

[6] Specifically, Stephanos of Byzantium.

ship with Pausanias, either as influencers or influences, has grown to include not only Longus but Aelian, Lucian, Aelius Aristeides, Arrian, Athenagoras of Athens, Pollux and Philostratos,[7] an impressive list for an age in which referring to one's literary contemporaries by name was not fashionable. Likewise, facile characterizations of the novels as frivolous and fantastic, and Pausanias as ploddingly sober and unimaginative, are increasingly being recognized on scholars of both sides of this putative literary divide to be gross overgeneralizations, if not outright errors.

No matter how useful Pausanias' text is, and how accurate a record it is of Greek topography, history, religion and culture, a growing number of readers are recognizing the ineluctable fact that throughout his work Pausanias was striving to produce ambitious literary effects on every level: in the way he structures his work, in the way he develops certain themes, and in the way he deploys a diapason of literary styles and voices.[8] As is typical of writers of the period of the Second Sophistic, Pausanias' text is a richly mannered melange of allusions to the great authors of the past, particularly, in Pausanias' case, to Herodotos, but also to Thucydides and others.[9] But this very relationship with the past involves him in an intertextual dialogue with literary contemporaries who were similarly forging a new response to the classical tradition. The novelists are not exempt from that interaction.

One of the most Pausanias-like passages outside of Pausanias occurs, once again, in *Daphnis and Chloe*, when the narrator introduces the novel's framing conceit, claiming that the story he will tell is the written manifestation of the visual narrative that he saw in a painting at a grove of the Nymphs in Lesbos (*Prologue* 1.1–3).[10]

> While hunting on Lesbos I saw in a grove of the Nymphs the most beautiful sight I had ever seen: a painted image, a story of love. . . . It exhibited outstanding craftsmanship and a romantic adventure (τύχην ἐρωτικήν), so that many people, even foreigners, came both to worship the Nymphs and to see the painting. . . . As I was looking with wonder at

[7] Aelian: cf. Bowie (2001) 29–30; Lucian: Lightfoot (2003) 218; Hutton (2005) 191–213; Arrian: Hutton (2005) 238–240; Pollux: Hanell (1938). Aristeides: Oliver (1972); Philostratos: Dickey (1997); Athenagoras: Snodgrass (2003). Cf. Pretzler (2007) 27.

[8] A partial list of recent works that have taken Pausanias' text seriously as literature: Elsner (1995) 125–155; Elsner (2001); Porter (2001); Sidebottom (2002); Akujärvi (2005); Ellinger (2005); König (2005) 186–204; Newby (2005) 202–228; Hutton (2005); Pretzler (2007). Other important work will be referred to in subsequent notes.

[9] Porter (2001); Hutton (2005) 175–272.

[10] Hunter (1983) 38–52; Jones (2001) 36–37; Hutton (2005) 49–50.

> these and other things, all of them romantic (ἐρωτικά), a desire overcame me to copy the painting in writing, so I found an interpreter of the painting and wrote four books as an offering to Eros and the Nymphs and Pan.

Here we have the sort of scene that replays itself hundreds of times in the text of Pausanias: a visitor arrives at a shrine, finds an evocative monument within it, and inquires after its identity and meaning. Comparable to this scene in many ways, and also dating vaguely to some time in the second or third century, is the "periegetical" opening to Achilles' Tatius novel *Leukippe and Kleitophon*:[11] The narrator (that is, the authorial narrator, who soon turns the story over to the first-person narration of the story's male protagonist) tells us of his arrival at the city of Sidon and describes, in a manner reminiscent of Pausanias, the layout of the city and the origins of its people. He first visits a shrine and makes a thank-offering for his safe arrival by sea, then wanders through the city "looking around at the offerings" (1.2: περισκοπῶν τὰ ἀναθήματα). Among the things he sees is a painting of Europa and the Bull, which he proceeds to describe in extensive detail (1.2–13). Unlike the painting in *Daphnis and Chloe* the narrative in this painting does not constitute the story of the novel, but it does set the tone and foreshadow some of the novel's events. It also provides the occasion for the author to introduce his protagonist. Among the details of the painting is the depiction of Eros leading the bull, symbolizing the fact that it was under Eros' influence that Zeus changed himself into a bull to attract the unsuspecting maiden. This image produces a pronounced effect on the author/narrator (2.1):

> I admired other parts of the painting as well, but since I am devoted to (E/e)ros (ἐρωτικός), I gazed most attentively at Eros leading the bull, and I said "What a terrific baby, who rules over heaven, earth and sea!"

In response to this passionate exclamation, a young man standing nearby, who turns out to be Kleitophon, accosts the narrator and offers to tell his own tale, a tale confirming the overwhelming might of the infant Eros.

One obvious point to make about these passages from the novels is that they exemplify a penchant for description that is common to the novels and to Pausanias.[12] A good deal has been written in recent years

[11] On the programmatic nature of this opening, see Morales (2004) 36–48.

[12] For the importance of description in the novels, see Bartsch (1989), esp. 3–39;

about the prevalence of *ekphrasis* in the novels, and Achilles' detailed description of the Europa painting is a good example of what is usually meant by that term. Surprisingly, perhaps, there are relatively few passages in Pausanias to which that label could be applied comfortably. Pausanias' descriptions of individual objects tend to be terse and relatively free of rhetorical showmanship. Only on a few occasions does he engage in detailed enumeration of the features of a particular monument (as, for instance, at the Throne of Apollo in Amyklai [3.18.9–19.5]), or in detailed explication of a narrative artwork (as in the case of the paintings of Polygnotos in the Knidian Lesche at Delphi: [10.25.1–32.4]).[13] More typical is his spare and affect-free treatment of the famous and (presumably) astonishing gold-and-ivory colossus of Athena in the Parthenon (1.24.7): "The statue of Athena is a standing one in a full-length cloak, and on her chest the head of Medusa is fashioned in ivory".[14] Of course, one could look upon the whole of the *Description of Greece* as *ekphrasis* on a grand scale, as one could also do in the case of *Daphnis and Chloe*, since the entire novel purports to be the explication of a narrative painting. Without getting too deeply into the problems of defining and interpreting *ekphrasis*, we can say that all three works exhibit, in different ways, an appreciation for physical monuments, not only as objects of intrinsic value and interest but also as devices for anchoring narrative in a concrete world of historical, cultural and religious associations. Such an appreciation is apparent in other literature of the period as well. One thinks, for instance, of how the *Tabula of Cebes* is framed, like *Daphnis and Chloe*, as the explication of a painting in a shrine for sightseeing visitors, or how Philostratos will frequently append to his biographies of the sophists detailed periegetical information on monuments related to the sophists' lives and deaths.[15]

Hardie (1998); Paschalis (2002); Morales (2004). In Pausanias: Elsner (1995); Hutton (2005) 49–51; Pretzler (1997) 110–114.

[13] The only other descriptions of single artifacts or monuments that are comparable in length and degree of detail are those of the Pheidian statue of Zeus and the Chest of Kypselos, both at Olympia (5.11.1–11 and 5.17.5–19.10).

[14] On Pausanias' descriptions of artworks, and the contrast between his objective and dry descriptions and the emotive and rhetorical ekphraseis of his contemporaries, see Kreilinger (1997); Snodgrass (2001) 127–141; Sidebottom (2002); Pretzler (2007) 105–117.

[15] *Tabula of Cebes* 1.1; Philostratos *VS* 21 (518); 22 (526), e.g.

The similarities between the novels and Pausanias do not end there. Both of the novelistic narrators present themselves as travelers, like Pausanias and like the typical heroes of novels. This is more obvious in the case of Achilles than it is with Longus, but Longus' narrator presents himself as a visitor to Lesbos, or at least to the shrine he is describing. His status as an outsider is revealed in part by his dependence on a local guide to interpret the meaning of the artwork, a need that Pausanias acknowledges in his own writing on numerous occasions;[16] like the text of a mystery cult, the meaning of the representation is not self-evident and the narrator must be schooled by a prior initiate before producing his own interpretation.

Religious associations are important to the openings of both novels; Achilles' narrator portrays himself as a pious person whose first thought on reaching town is to visit a shrine to render thanks to the city's goddess, Astarte. The painting of Europa and the Bull is not explicitly described as being in Astarte's shrine or any other sacred spot, but as we have seen the narrator comes across it while "looking around at the offerings" (ἀναθήματα), rather than at the sights or the monuments more generally, and his close study of the painting inspires in him a rapturous paean to the puissance of a deity to whom he expresses a strong personal attachment. In *Daphnis and Chloe*, the religious theme of the opening is even more evident in the sacred nature of the monument and the locality, and the devotional purpose to which the narrator ascribes his efforts. The religious associations of both accounts echo the strong role of religion in Pausanias' work.[17] Like Achilles' narrator who wanders the city admiring the "offerings" in preference to other types of sights, Pausanias displays a marked preference for religious monuments and artifacts over secular ones. He claims to have participated in many rituals at the various shrines he visits in the course of his travels,[18] and on numerous occasions he refuses to discuss sacred things that his

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[16] For a discussion of such references, and of the identity of Pausanias' guides (not the ignorant and venal pests they are assumed to be in much modern commentary on Pausanias, but members of the educated elite of the communities Pausanias visits), see Jones (2001). The viewers of the *Tabula of Cebes* are likewise incapable of understanding the painting they are looking at until an interpreter offers to help them.

[17] The most thorough examination of the religious nature of Pausanias' persona is Heer (1974). See also Elsner (1995).

[18] A particularly good example is his consultation of the oracle of Trophonios at Lebadeia (9.39.2–14).

religious scruples (and/or admonitory dreams) tell him should not be divulged to the uninitiated public.[19]

There are, then, definite similarities in the religious tenor of all three accounts, but at this point we must confront an important difference: while Longus' and Achilles' narrators make overt display of a personal piety that mirrors that of their main characters, the connection between the personality of Pausanias' narrator and the stories he relates is more remote. While Pausanias describes hundreds of artworks, and frequently refers to his own religious attitudes and activities, there are few cases where the two go hand-in-hand as they do in introductions of these two novels. We have already considered how Pausanias' treatment of monuments tends to be dry, laconic, and free of the sort of affective response we find in both of the passages we have been considering from the novels.[20] Although he occasionally expresses wonderment or awe upon encountering a particular sight or monument, it is usually the size or the workmanship or the material that produces this effect,[21] rather than any religious associations that the object may have, or any sacred or historical narratives that might be connected with it. He almost never portrays his first-hand experience with an object as something that inspires a personal religious response, as do the narrators of *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Leukippe and Kleitophon*.

There are a number of exceptions to this general observation, however, and a string of them occurs in quick succession in the middle of the Pausanias' Book VII, the volume he devotes to the territory of Achaia. In and around the city of Patrai, Pausanias—or perhaps at this point we should begin saying Pausanias' narrator—visits (amongst other things) a shrine of Artemis, a sanctuary of Dionysos and a river to which local lore attributes supernatural properties. To each of these items in the landscape Pausanias relates a substantial narrative. That in itself is not unusual: nearly half of Pausanias' text comprises historical or mythical narrative associated with the localities and monuments that lie along the course of his itineraries. What is unusual about these particular stories is their content and the tone. All deal with amorous relationships between couples that end up less than completely

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[19] The most striking example being his refusal to describe the shrine of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis when forbidden to by a dream (1.38.7).

[20] See n. 13 above.

[21] E.g. at the theater of Epidauros: 2.27.5; or at the "Treasury of Minyas" in Boiotian Orchomenos 9.26.5, 9.38.2.

happily. At the shrine of Artemis Laphria we hear about Komaitho and Melanippos, a star-crossed pair whose families are opposed to their union. In the end they are sacrificed to avert a plague brought on by their illicit assignation in the temple of Artemis (7.19.2–5). At the Dionysos shrine we are told that a priest of Dionysos, Koresos, falls in love with a maiden, Kallirhoe, who does not initially return his affections. Their tale ends in a fashion gothically reminiscent of Romeo and Juliet, with Koresos killing himself rather than performing human sacrifice on his beloved, and with Kallirhoe, upon Koresos' death, repenting of her obstinacy and killing herself as well (7.21.1–5). At the banks of the Selemnos we hear of the origin of the river's waters: the nymph Argyra is in love with the shepherd Selemnos. As Selemnos grows older, however, Argyra loses interest. Selemnos dies and is transformed into the river bearing his name. In apparent compensation for Selemnos' fate, his waters are reputed to have the ability to cure the pain of love for people—women as well as men—who bathe in it (7.23.1–3).

All of these tales bring us closer than most things in Pausanias' text to the world of the novel. While the central couples are denied the happy ending that the protagonists of the canonical novels enjoy, all the stories deal with erotic relationships between heterosexual couples, and like Achilles' painting of Europa and the Bull, each of them illustrates, in one way or another, the power of Eros to bring both joy and pain. Even more striking than the content of these stories, however, is the new mask that Pausanias' narrator assumes in the telling of them. While most such narratives in the text are reported with a detached objectivity, these tales appear to have affected the narrator more strongly; as in the case of Longus they seem to have brought him to insights on the nature of love that he feels he must impart to the reader: Pausanias tells us that he would not classify what happened to Komaitho and Melanippos as a disaster, "for the only thing worth a human being's life is to achieve success in love" (7.19.5: μόνον γὰρ δὴ ἀνθρώπῳ ψυχῆς ἐστιν ἀντάξιον κατορθῶσαί τινα ἐρασθέντα); Koresos' self-sacrifice means that the priest had, according to Pausanias, "the most sincere disposition toward love of any man of which we know" (7.21.4: ἀνθρώπων ὧν ἴσμεν διατεθεὶς ἐς ἔρωτα ἀπλαστότατα). In the case of Argyra and Selemnos he makes the following statement about the miraculous ability of the river Selemnos to cure heartache (7.23.3): "If there is any truth to the report, the water of the Selemnos is more valuable to humankind than a large amount of money" (εἰ δὲ μέτεστιν

ἀληθείας τῷ λόγῳ, τιμιώτερον χρημάτων πολλῶν ἐστιν ἀνθρώποις τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦ Σελέμνου).

These first-person testimonials on the power of Eros to destroy and, at the same time, ennoble are decidedly out of character for Pausanias' narrator and render him more comparable than he is anywhere else to Achilles the ἐρωτικός or to Longus' pious huntsman. This new persona for Pausanias is not completely confined to these stories but seems also to pervade the self-image his narrator presents us with throughout much of the topographical portion of the seventh book (the first two thirds of the book are devoted to historical narrative, chiefly that of the Roman conquest of the Achaean League). In discussing the population of the city of Patrai he makes a truly extraordinary comment on the character of the Patraian women: "they have as great a share of Aphrodite as any women" (7.21.14: Ἀφροδίτης δέ, εἴπερ ἄλλαις γυναιξί, μέτεστι καὶ ταύταις). Later on, in his description of the city of Aigeira, he comments on a statue depicting Tyche in the company of a winged Eros (7.26.8), suggesting by way of interpretation that the statue "is intended to signify that for human beings success comes through luck rather than by beauty, even in matters of love" (ἐθέλει δὲ σημαίνειν ὅτι ἀνθρώποις καὶ τὰ ἐς ἔρωτα τύχῃ μᾶλλον ἢ ὑπὸ κάλλους κατορθοῦται).[22]

Pausanias' apparent preoccupation with Eros in the seventh book might be explained in a number of ways. The possibility cannot be excluded that while writing that volume he was undergoing a particularly traumatic time in his own love life, but such biographical interpretation, in the case of an author whose biography is almost a complete blank for us, is probably better left by the wayside.[23] More cogent explanations have been suggested; for instance, that the stories represent a striving for *variatio*, with the aim of adding diversity to the monotonous catalogues of cities, temples and statues that constitute the bulk of the text.[24] While there may be some validity in that explanation,

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[22] Cf. Nimis (2003) 259–260 on the conjoined importance of Eros and Fortune in *Chaereas and Kallirhoe*.

[23] On 7.23.3 Habicht ([1985] 161) remarks, "Would [Pausanias] have made this remark if he had not experienced the sweetness, as well as the bitterness, of love?". On the few biographical inferences we can glean from Pausanias' text (no extra-textual evidence exists), see Habicht (1985) 12–15; Pretzler (2007) 21–26.

[24] Regenbogen (1956) 1011–1012. On the importance of *variatio* to Pausanias, see Engeli (1907); Strid (1976).

it is worth asking whether there is any significance in the particular narrative modality that Pausanias chooses to vary his diction with at this point.

Elsewhere I have argued that these excursions in Book VII into a territory shared with the novel form a deliberate and significant pattern with forays of a different sort that Pausanias makes into the same narrative realm in Book IV.[25] That book is consumed almost entirely by Pausanias' historical (or quasi-historical) narrative of the Messenian wars, and, as Jannick Auberger has pointed out in a series of articles, there are many elements of this narrative that are reminiscent of what we find in the novels.[26] Much of Pausanias' account follows the career of a single heroic character, Aristomenes, who engages in far-flung acts of daring, gets himself into many serious predicaments, and escapes death on a number of occasions, sometimes with the aid of a woman who finds him irresistible (e.g. 4.19.5–6). Much as the novelists (and, indeed, Lucian in the *True Stories*) frequently offer playful echoes of hard-nosed historical accounts of warfare (for instance, the battle scenes in Book VII of *Kallirhoe* [7.2.1–6.5]), Pausanias combines straightforward historical accounts of battle arrays (e.g. 4.7.3–8.13), commanders' exhortations (e.g. 4.7.9–11), and Olympic-year chronologies (e.g. 4.13.7) with divine epiphanies (e.g. 4.18.5–7), veridical oracles (e.g. 4.20.2), and such macabre episodes as a gruesomely mishandled virgin sacrifice (4.9.7–10) that recalls both the sacrifice of Verginia and the faux-slaughter of Leukippe in Book III of Achilles' novel (*Leukippe and Kleitophon* 3.15.2–17.7). In addition to the novelistic elements in the story of Aristomenes, the saga of the Messenians as a whole, in Pausanias' hands, takes on a plot-shape congruent to that of the canonical novels. Like the protagonists of such novels, the Messenians are driven from their homes by enemies human and divine and wander to various spots in the Mediterranean (e.g. 4.23.7–10; 4.25.2) until they finally return to their homeland with great pomp and ceremony following the defeat of the Spartans at the Battle of Leuktra (4.17.1–6).

It is no coincidence, I would argue, that the two sections of Pausanias' text most reminiscent of the contemporary novel, his Messenian narrative and the string of lovesick tales he presents in Achaia, occur in Books IV and VII, the two books that flank the central books of the

[25] Hutton (forthcoming).
[26] Auberger (1992a); (1992b); (2000); (2001).

work (V and VI), the volumes dedicated to Olympia.[27] Pausanias' narrative choices emphasize the correspondence of Books IV and VII in the architectonic structure of his work as a whole,[28] and help to shine a spotlight on another distinctive feature that the two accounts share, their unusually lengthy historical narratives: that of the Spartan conquest of Messenia in the former, and of the Roman conquest of the Achaian League (and hence, Hellas) in the latter. Pausanias' flirtations with romance form part of a panoply of structural and thematic strategies that invite the reader to compare and contrast these two episodes of conquest. That comparison is obviously of significance in our estimation of the aim of Pausanias' efforts and his attitude toward the place of Greece in the Roman world, but exploring such issues lies well beyond the scope of the present paper.[29] Suffice it to say that the narrative idiosyncrasies that Pausanias employs in Books IV and VII show signs of being deliberate and purposeful rather than accidental, and this suggests that the features of the genre(s) Pausanias was playing off against in these passages were sufficiently reified, at least in Pausanias' own thinking, for him to see their potential in them as iconic elements that his readers might recognize and respond to in a somewhat predictable fashion.

This brings us to the problem, however, of what genre(s) Pausanias was exploiting. What do we mean when we call the passages in Books IV and VII "novelistic"? As we have seen, none of the tales in Book VII could provide the plot for a canonical novel,[30] if for no other reason than that none of the couples survives to be united happily ever after. Similarly, one might object, as has Daniel Ogden,[31] that there are decidedly non-novelistic features to Pausanias' Messenian narrative as well. For instance, while Aristomenes attracts the amorous attentions of women, we are never told explicitly that he returns their affections, and

[27] On the thematic significance of the central position of Olympia in Pausanias' account, see Elsner (2001) 17; König (2005).

[28] In Hutton (forthcoming) I argue for a loose ring-structure in the ten books of Pausanias' account. On either side of the central books on Olympia, the strongest correspondences are between Books I (Attica) and X (Phokis/Delphi) and between the two books (IV and VII) discussed here. Cf. Bultrighini (1990).

[29] On the vexed topic of "Pausanias and the Romans" see Pretzler (2007) 28–29; and Hutton (2008); both with reference to earlier studies.

[30] Though they might well form the basis for a side-episode in such a novel; for instance, compare the story of Argyra and Selemnos in Pausanias with the story of Rhodopis in *Leukippe and Kleitophon* (8.12.1–9).

[31] Ogden (2004) 16–18.

he ends up married to none of them. Ogden notes that there are signs of an alternative tradition that Pausanias ignores (or was unaware of), in which Aristomenes' erotic exploits are given greater emphasis.[32] One might also argue that the elements in the two books that do seem "novelistic" could have found their way into Pausanias' stylistic repertoire from other sources. For instance, the two main sources that Pausanias cites for his Messenian account are the epic poet Rhianos and the notoriously histrionic historian Myron of Priene (4.6.1–5). Either or both of these could have provided Pausanias with the inspiration for some of the more fantastic and romantic elements of his account (although it was fully within his power to resist passing such elements on to the reader). In similar fashion one could argue that the stories in Book VII resemble folklore as much as they resemble the novel, if not more.

The problem is the same as with any of the literature that stands on the "fringe" of the set of texts we call novels: when the novels of Pausanias' time bear so patently the genetic traces of various earlier types of storytelling and literary expression, folktale, epic, tragedy, oratory, comedy old and new, Hellenistic poetry, Herodotean ethnography, Thucydidean historiography, geographies serious and imaginary, how can we point to any particular element in a work that is not a novel and say that is more like a novel than it is like anything else? The answer is, of course, that we usually can't; but what we can do is observe that types of tales and motifs we see in Pausanias' Books IV and VII—tales of romance, tales exalting the power of Eros, tales of travel and adventure, tales of divine intervention in the lives of ordinary mortals—are constated more emphatically in the novels than in any other literature of the period. So when an author such as Pausanias chooses to employ such motifs selectively and for deliberate effects, we may not be justified in concluding that the choice results from direct contact with some form of the canonical novel, but we can at least suggest that it emerges from the same intertextual ballpark. There is something about the times, the authors and the audiences in this period that encourage the use of such motifs to a degree that is not (demonstrably) true of earlier periods, and Pausanias is hardly alone among "non-fiction" authors of his era in taking advantage of the emblematic power of such accounts.[33]

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[32] Ogden (2004) 17.

[33] I expect that other offerings in this volume will provide sufficient examples of this, but in the context of Pausanias one might mention the odd story of Stratonike

In addition to themes and motifs one can also augment the critical mass of common ground between Pausanias and the novelists by looking at matters of self-presentation and narrative strategies. The persona Pausanias' narrator adopts in the middle of Book VII is an instance of the former, and we will soon take a brief look at another possible case. In the realm of narrative strategy, an interesting example occurs at the end of the Messenian narrative. Pausanias tells us that when the Messenians were on the verge of being overrun by the Spartans, Aristomenes buried a secret object by night in the ground of Mount Ithome, an object the fate of which would determine that of the Messenians themselves (4.20.4):

> And the Messenians had a certain thing that they kept secret; if lost it was destined to plunge Messene into everlasting oblivion, but if preserved . . . the Messenians would regain their land at some later time.

In narrating these events Pausanias refrains from telling us what the mysterious object is. It is only later, when the Messenians have returned to their homeland after Leuktra, that he reveals the secret: Epiteles, the Argive ally who is helping the Messenians construct a new capital city on Mount Ithome, is told by a prophetic dream to dig at a certain spot on the mountain and "save the old woman" (4.26.7). Epiteles does as instructed and recovers the "old woman", which turns out to be, of course, the object that Aristomenes had buried many centuries before: a bronze jar containing sacred texts of the cult of Andania, the most sacred mystery cult of the Messenians. As I have pointed out elsewhere,[34] Pausanias is following a hermeneutic narrative strategy in this case, one that draws the reader forward by withholding critical information that the narrator possesses until the moment when its revelation can be most effective. The revelation of the secret of the "old woman" at the end of the Messenians' saga brings an appropriate conclusion to Pausanias' account of how the long-suffering Messenians recovered their geographical, political and, in the end, religious identity. This hermeneutic technique has few parallels in other literature of the period, except in the novels. One thinks, for instance of the

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and Kombabos that Lucian inserts into the middle of his periegetical essay *On the Syrian Goddess* 19–27. Lightfoot (2003) 384 characterizes this tale as "showpiece *faux-naïf* Herodotean novella". It strikes me that "showpiece", "*faux-naïf*", and "Herodotean" are all adjectives that could be applied to various parts of the surviving novels, as well as to parts of Pausanias.

[34] Hutton (forthcoming).

delayed revelation of the identity of the main characters at the beginning of Heliodoros' *Aethiopica*, or the noble birth of Daphnis and Chloe, revealed only at the end of their eponymous novel (though of course the perceptive reader would anticipate this revelation from the tokens that are found with them at the beginning).[35]

Another possible example of this hermeneutic technique can be traced throughout the text and brings us back to the issue of the author's self-presentation. One piece of information that Pausanias surely possesses but initially withholds from the reader is his own identity. Pausanias begins his work by plunging the reader abruptly into the realm of topographical description, without prologue and without any word of introduction (1.1.1):

> On the Hellenic mainland in the direction of the Cyclades islands and the Aegean sea, the headland Sounion projects from Attic territory. And for one sailing past the headland there is a temple of Athena Sounias ... and for one sailing further there is Laurion ...

Some have suggested that an original prologue may have been lost in the transmission of the text.[36] This possibility cannot be ruled out, but the fact is that there is no evidence for it. There is nothing unintelligible about the opening as it stands, and a number of scholars have pointed out ways it might be viewed as programmatic for the work as a whole.[37] One of the important issues that this beginning refrains from addressing, however, is who the author is and why he is writing this work. This initial reticence is perpetuated to a remarkable degree as the work progresses. Although Pausanias' descriptions of places are based, in most if not all cases, on his own travels, spatial movement along the itineraries he traces is not usually expressed by first-person verbs and pronouns but by indefinite participles, as in the passage above ("for one sailing ...", "for one sailing further ..."). If one peruses the comprehensive analysis of Pausanias' first-person references compiled by Johanna Akujärvi,[38] it emerges that Pausanias' narrator refers to his own identity as a traveler and sightseer only once within the first several sections of Book I, and even then only obliquely and unobtrusively (1.5.3): "As for Kekrops and Pandion—for *I saw* statues of them also among the epony-

[35] For these and other examples of this narrative strategy in the novels, see Winkler (1982) 95–101; Fusillo (1988) 26–27; Morgan (1994).
[36] See Bowie (2001) 21–23, with reference to earlier studies.
[37] Robert (1909) 264–265; Elsner (2001) 7; Hutton (2005) 175–176.
[38] Akujärvi (2005) 25–178.

mous heroes [in the Agora of Athens]—I don't know which ones they are honoring". The next such reference does not occur until the middle of the book (1.24.7). Only gradually does the reader realize that what he or she is reading is the eyewitness account of a traveler who actually followed the routes being described. What little else Pausanias tells us about his identity is, similarly, revealed only piecemeal.

Traditionally, this aspect of Pausanias' style has been attributed to a certain modesty of temperament or to the author's disinclination to inject an overtly subjective viewpoint into a work that is intended to be objective and utilitarian, but neither of those explanations does very well at accounting for the fact that there are numerous times when Pausanias does offer an opinion in his own voice—sometimes quite assertively. For instance in his eighth book, the volume on Arkadia, he delivers the following scathing comment, which is obviously directed, at least in part, at the contemporary cult of the Roman emperors (8.2.6):[39]

> In my day—since evil has grown to a such an extant and visits itself upon every land and all the cities—not a single god arises from the ranks of mankind, except in name only and in the flattery addressed to the powerful …

The position of this statement in the eighth book is significant: in the same book one finds a number of similar manifestos on matters religious, political, and ethical.[40] Pausanias presents at least some of these uncharacteristically blunt and opinionated statements as stemming from new insights he has gained from the experience of traveling and composing his text, including the following oft-discussed passage, which Pausanias appends to his report of an Arcadian variation on the legend of Kronos and Rhea (8.8.2):

> When I began writing I tended to attribute such stories of the Greeks to simple-mindedness, but now that I have gotten as far as Arcadian matters I began to take a more cautious attitude toward them in the following way: I surmised that those of the Greeks who were considered wise in olden days used to tell stories through riddles, rather than directly, and that the things said about Kronos were thus a sort of wisdom of the Greeks. Of the things that pertain to the divine, we shall make use of what is said.

In Arkadia Pausanias thus portrays himself as someone who has gained, through his experience with the sites and monuments of Hellas, a

[39] Cf. Hutton (2005) 318–319.
[40] Hutton (2005) 303–307; Hutton (forthcoming).

deeper appreciation for the value of Greek traditions, and a corresponding disdain for new ways that are inconsistent with those traditions, such as the imperial cult. I would argue that the hermeneutic approach that Pausanias takes toward revealing information about himself serves to heighten the effect of this epiphany. In Book VIII we have the counterpart in the realm of the narrator's persona to the recovery of the "old woman" by Epiteles in Book IV. Such an approach toward self-presentation in a work of this scope is hard to find a parallel for in literature of the period, a period in which authors often seem to consider the establishment of their own identity and *auctoritas* in the eyes of the reader as their first and most important task. The main place where one does find this sort of thing is in the novels, the authors of which seem to revel in sophisticated manipulations of the boundaries between author, narrator and character. A good comparandum is to be found, once again, in the *Aethiopika*, where Heliodoros' narrator does not reveal his own identity until the very end of the text.[41]

In conclusion, there is not, and probably never will be, any proof of direct influence in either direction between Pausanias and Longus, or between Pausanias and any of the authors of our surviving novels. But the circumstantial evidence suggests that some sort of contact is likely. In his purposeful employment of novelistic motifs and in his subtle and inventive rhetoric of self-presentation, Pausanias reveals himself to be an active participant in a literary aesthetic that is reflected, if not potentiated, by the contemporary novel. If one makes an attempt to read Pausanias with the assumptions and expectations that an ancient reader of the novels might have had, then a number of things about his enigmatic text that seem puzzling or haphazard on first glance—such as the abrupt beginning of his text and the singular nature of his Messenian and Achaian narratives—begin to make sense.

As a closing thought, I would like to suggest that it can also be fruitful to turn the analysis offered here on its head by reading the novels through the eyes of Pausanias' intended audience. In a recent article John Morgan has examined the motif of travel in the Greek novel, and has come to the conclusion that at least in the earlier novels, travel is less an ideological motif, one that the author exploits either

[41] See Fusillo (1997) 213 on the "gradual disclosure of the narrator's voice" in Heliodoros. One might also compare Apuleius' tactics in the *Metamorphoses*, where the lines between author and narrator(s) are frequently blurred, and where we don't learn the main narrator's name until well into the first book (1.24).

for character development or for the exploration of issues of ethnicity and identity, than a convenient narratological thread "on which the pearls of action are strung".[42] He bases this conclusion on the fact that travel is not "thematised" in the earlier novels; that is, little time is spent describing the actual practice of traveling and its physical or psychological effects on the characters. The act of traveling, in other words, seems far less important than what happens when the characters arrive at their destination. If we look at Pausanias, we find that the same thing is largely true: Pausanias notoriously spends very little time describing the actual process of traveling from site to site, and very little effort describing the comforts and inconveniences that one can expect along the way. Yet, if the interpretation offered above has any validity, Pausanias is indeed trying to communicate the experience of travel as having something of a transformative effect on the traveler. If we look at Pausanias and the earlier novelists (Chariton and Xenophon) side by side, perhaps we can discern a distinct ethic of writing about travel, one that locates the transformative and enlightening part of it not in the process of moving from one place to another but in simply being somewhere different from where you used to be. This does not, of course, invalidate Morgan's insight that the later novelists, Achilles and Heliodoros, develop new and interesting ways of exploiting the motif.

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[42] Morgan (2007); the quotation comes on p. 145.

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CHAPTER TEN

FICTIONAL ANXIETIES*

Richard Hunter

I

"The genre: novels proper and the fringe" is the title of Niklas Holzberg's helpful survey in a standard handbook.[1] "Proper" may denote not just "the real thing", i.e. genuine examples of whatever we take a "novel" to be (the risk of circularity here is obviously real, though it need not be paralysing), but also "clean, conventional, decent, approved"; the word itself implies a boundary of exclusion. As is well known, all novels (and "novel-like" works) in antiquity were "fringe" performances in one or more senses; sometimes this was a status which they constructed for themselves and in which they revelled, sometimes it is a status conferred upon them, for better or ill, by modern scholarship, sometimes a bit of both. For ancient novels of all types the "centre" was the inherited pattern of literary genres and their conventions; if modern scholars of the ancient novel have now created a "central/proper" and "fringe" distinction, we may be tempted to think that this is a way of taking revenge for all those decades of being patronised as a sad and/or lunatic fringe interest.

That "centres" and "fringes" are mutually implicating does not require much demonstration; you cannot have one without the other. The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is a helpful illustration. Although the Fringe is now nearly as "organised" as the Festival itself, the title conveys notions of openness and accessibility, where anyone can stand up and ply his or her (comic) trade, a home for amateurs and experiments

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* This essay combines parts of two lectures given at various times in Athens, Dublin, Melbourne and Sydney; I have tried to preserve the flavour of the oral presentation as far as possible. I am grateful to those four audiences for the spirit in which they listened and to the Editor for her hospitality.

[1] Holzberg (1996).

rather than for polished professionals. In such a structure, apparently separate forms of musical and dramatic entertainment blend freely, so that "generic form" is less obviously static than in the performances at the Festival proper; the analogy with so-called "fringe novels" should be obvious. Nevertheless, it is also important that the Fringe grew out of the Festival "proper" and remains parasitic upon it; the sense of "fringeness" remains important to its sense of self-identity, however conventional and accepted it itself has now become. "Difference", deviation from an accepted model, and the vague aroma of the illicit are important to fringes.

Some of the texts which have been consigned to "the fringe" might of course claim that they have nothing to do with "the novel" and hence with "deviation" from some supposed centre; the link between them is, rather, a construction of modern scholarship and the exigencies of academic organisation and careers. The *Life of Aesop*, a text which is (deservedly) attracting more and more attention, might be thought to be one such misused narrative. "Mit dem antiken Roman hat [der *Aisoposroman*] nichts gemein" pronounced Paul Maas,[2] and Maas is not someone to be disagreed with lightly. Nevertheless, recent scholarship has not found it difficult to find motifs and ideas shared between the *Life* and the ancient novels, particularly the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius;[3] Jack Winkler's comparison of the satirical moral outlook of the *Life* and that of the *Metamorphoses* has been very influential.[4] It is of course easy enough to think of further lines of enquiry one could pursue. Thus, for example, the celebrated (and almost impossible to translate) description of Aesop's mind-boggling ugliness with which the *Life* opens[5] could be taken as a parodic reversal of the impossible beauty of novel heroes and heroines which is usually described at the opening of the works (cf., e.g., Xen. Eph. 1.1–2). The point would perhaps be that, though Aesop is not a supernaturally handsome member of the elite, but rather an incredibly ugly slave whose parents are apparently not even worth mentioning (a more striking phenomenon in an ancient text than it would be in a modern one), this narrative, like Aesop himself, will be βιωφελέστατος.

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[2] *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 37 (1937) 377.

[3] Cf., e.g., Anderson (1984) 211–212; Finkelpearl (2003); Jouanno (2006) 55, 215 n. 133; Hunter (2007) 42–43; Zimmerman (2007).

[4] Winkler 1985: 276–291.

[5] The description of this ugliness and its affiliations are interestingly discussed in Papademetriou (1997) 10–42.

However that may be, there is probably not much to be gained from prolonged agonising over whether there is an "essential" centre and fringe among ancient fictional narrative texts; there have, of course, been many attempts to interrogate the related idea of a distinct "genre" of "ideal novel", and I need not repeat those here. Rather, what *is* important are the questions that such labels make us ask. It is obviously important that the grouping together of the five Greek novels which survive in a manuscript tradition forces us to ask questions about sameness and difference, though there is, as Helen Morales points out in her contribution to the present volume, a serious danger that such grouping tends to privilege sameness over difference. It is that grouping, as much as anything else, which has led to advances in our understanding of, for example, the chronology and geographical focus of the "ideal novels". So too, the idea of "fringeness" can be a helpful way of focusing upon some aspects of many different kinds of narrative text which may have become stale through over-familiarity. If "fringeness" is importantly inherent in ancient novels, it is also very obviously a central creative force in modern literature and film (to go no further): art often moves towards the edge. In this brief essay I want to pursue some of the implications of this, and some of the continuities over time, through a glance at two modern Australian novels. The choice is obviously not a random one (and may be thought over-determined), but Australian fiction is perhaps not without interest for students of the ancient novel. To paint it with the broadest brush, for much of its white existence Australia was a "fringe" country in almost every respect, one overly conscious of, and anxious about, the fact that it derived from a powerful and normative "centre" (which was also a long way away); however self-assured Australian writers and artists were, the consumers of Australian "culture" were far from clear that this product was "the real thing". Even today, when Australia finds itself on the "Pacific Rim" rather than the fringe and the sense of "properly" belonging has finally (perhaps) taken root, there is no getting away from the unimaginable dangers which lurk in the "nothingness" at the heart of the country, and it is hardly surprising that novelists and film-makers return to this theme time and time again.

In Patrick White's novel, *A Fringe of Leaves* (1976), which concerns an English woman shipwrecked in northern Australia and captured by Aboriginals in the early nineteenth century, the fringe marks the boundary between conventional society and its morality and that which such conventionality seeks to shut out; whether as a metaphorical border or

as an improvised skirt whose value as a symbol is far greater than as a method of concealment, the very tenuousness of the fringe is a marker of just how important that boundary is, but also how easily it can be obliterated. There are very few societies as convention-bound as the social elite of fictionalised nineteenth-century Australia, and few societies where the abandonment of convention was so provocatively close a temptation (as it still is). The geography of that Australia—a thin coastal strip of green land and inhabitation, a "fringe of leaves", behind which broods an unimaginably large "other" into which White's most memorable characters are ineluctably drawn—dramatises how precarious our hold on convention is. One might compare (perhaps) the movement in Chariton's novel away from the Greek world and into the vast "barbarian" spaces; White's Aboriginals are a cannibalistic "anti-society" fashioned of white man's worst dreamings (cf. the *boukoloi* of Lollianus and others).

White's novel throws a number of issues into relief. Its heroine is herself not a member of the gentry but has married into it, and her upward social mobility is a constant source of anxiety to her and potential attack to others. It is often remarked that the central characters of the Greek "ideal" novel come from the higher socio-political echelons of their respective states—we "look up to" not only their physical attractiveness but also their "success". Even the characters who stand closest to the bucolic upbringing of White's heroine, namely Longus' Daphnis and Chloe, turn out to come from the highest social class. The "ideal novel" regularly dramatises the threats to that class and its ideology, but at the end it is that class which closes around "its own" in a re-establishment of good order, often marked by the end of dislocating travel and a return to roots. In White's novel, too, "society", which once took Mrs Roxburgh in when she married "above" herself, closes around her again at the end (whatever its worries about what might or might not have happened to her in the bush), and her return to the local centre, Sydney, is underway and that (her real *nostos*) to the "proper" centre (England) is foreshadowed. For its part, the ancient "fringe" (as commonly understood) often dramatises the lives and doings of those whose grip on "society" is rather fragile; the question of the relation between the rise of the novel and "social mobility" is of course a very big one in modern literary studies, and there have been important tentative steps in this direction for the ancient novel, but the constant struggle of the central characters of the "ideal novel" to maintain that barrier, the "fringe of leaves", which separates them from descent into the lower

reaches of society and its practices is itself of interest. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, sex and the constant temptations of sensuality are at the heart of that struggle, one dramatised many times over, for example, in the works of such as Chariton and Xenophon of Ephesus. This struggle also lies at the heart of the distinction between types in White's vision:

> Just as she was to learn that death was for Mr Roxburgh a "literary conceit", so she found that his approach to passion had its formal limits. For her part, she longed to, but had never dared, storm those limits and carry him off instead of submitting to his hesitant though loving rectitude. "Tup" was a word she remembered out of a past she had all but forgotten, in which her own passive ewes submitted, while bees flitted wilfully from thyme to furze, the curlew whistled at dusk, and night was filled with the badger's chattered messages. She herself had only once responded with a natural ardour, but discovered on her husband's face an expression of having tasted something bitter, or of looking too deep. So she replaced the mask which evidently she was expected to wear, and because he was an honourable as well as a pitiable man, she would refrain in future from tearing it off.
>
> Patrick White, *A Fringe of Leaves* pp. 67–68[6]

The heroine's desire for experience which is less generically constrained than "ideal marriage" is in fact met in one brief act of adultery with her brother-in-law and then in an extended series of real and or dreamed nights with the escaped convict (more "fringe" / "rough trade" material) who rescues her from the Aboriginals. If the "ideal" novel works towards the inculcation of the dominant ideology, it of necessity also contains elements of interrogation, because without that interrogation there would be no narrative: the narrative always holds out the possibility that "things will go wrong", and showing us how they could go wrong (e.g. our heroine enters into a passionate and adulterous affair with one of her admirers) entails the display of other modes of behaviour.

Convention, then, is very important to both centres and fringes. Thus, for example, whatever relationship we wish to posit between the *Satyrica* and the *Metamorphoses* on the one hand and the Greek "ideal" novel on the other, it would, I think, be hard to deny that both Latin novels exploit a sense of difference from conventionally authorised texts; they—and their characters—operate *extra legem*, as

[6] I cite from the Penguin edition of 1977.

Alessandro Barchiesi emphasised for the *Satyrica*.[7] They also, of course, are—from another point of view—fully licensed to be different; they are "carnival" texts which are nourished and draw support from the very society which they overturn in their narratives.[8] To what extent the same is true for Greek "fringe" texts may be debated, and it is likely that a wide spectrum of answers will fit the texts which survive in whole or part. To return to the *Life of Aesop*, for example, there are very interesting questions to be asked about the extent to which this alleged "Volksbuch" is actually subversive of received, elite wisdom (which elite is likely to have taken Xanthos the philosopher seriously?).

2

The second topic on which I wish to touch briefly is that of "truth" and historicity, an anxiety which is reflected in literary story-telling at all levels, central and fringe, throughout antiquity. It is famously thematised in, for example, the proems of both Chariton and Achilles Tatius and the opening chapters of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, but nowhere so obviously and explicitly (unsurprisingly) as in the prologue to Lucian's *True Histories* (a "fringe" text?), and here I will be principally concerned with one of that work's descendants.

In order to illustrate the importance both of the theme and of the literary descent of the theme, however, I wish to begin with a small section of Porphyry's work *On Abstinence from Killing (and Eating) Animals* (late third century AD). In the early part of the third book Porphyry deals with the *logos*, "speech and rationality", of animals:

> Yet, if we are to believe the ancients and those who lived in our own time and our fathers' time, there are those who are said to have heard and understood the speech of animals … A friend of mine used to relate how he was lucky enough to have a slave-boy who understood all the speech of birds, and everything they said was a prophecy announcing what would shortly happen; but he lost his understanding because his mother feared that he would be sent as a gift to the emperor, and urinated in his ears as he slept.

[7] Barchiesi (1996). For the idea of the literal "outlaw" in the novel cf. further below p. 180.

[8] There is of course a huge post-Bakhtin bibliography on the general subject; both general and specific guidance in Branham (2005).

> Let us pass over these stories because of our natural trait of incredulity (*apistia*) ...
>
> Porphyry, *On Abstinence* 3.3.6–4.1 (trans. G. Clark)

In moving on to information which will (apparently) not strain our sense of incredulity, Porphyry adduces the behaviour of the Indian hyena:

> The Indian hyena, which the natives call "corocotta", speaks in so human a way, even without a teacher, that it prowls around houses and calls whoever looks like an easy prey, imitating their nearest and dearest and the speech to which the person called would respond in all circumstances. So the Indians, even though they know this, are deceived by the resemblance, go out in response to the call and get eaten.
>
> Porphyry, *On Abstinence* 3.4.5 (trans. G. Clark)

We may not wish to spend long on trying to decide whether these stories are true (the logistics of the urination story do not bear thinking about and the hyena story is at least unflattering to the intelligence of Indians), but the truth status of even such stories as this was clearly a matter of anxiety for the ancients, and this can, I think, shed light on this recurrent theme both within and beyond the fringe of storytelling. Moreover, the hyena's behaviour is clearly modelled upon that ascribed to Helen at Troy in Menelaos' narration in the fourth book of the *Odyssey*:

> τρὶς δὲ περίστειξας κοῖλον λόχον ἀμφαφόωσα,
> ἐκ δ' ὀνομακλήδην Δαναῶν ὀνόμαζες ἀρίστους,
> πάντων Ἀργείων φωνὴν ἴσκουσ' ἀλόχοισιν·
>
> Three times you circled our hollow place of ambush [i.e. the wooden horse], running your hand over it, and you called out to the Danaan heroes by name, likening your voice to the wives of each of the Argives.
>
> Homer, *Odyssey* 4.277–279

It is clear from the scholia that v. 279 enjoyed a mixed reputation at best in antiquity ("This imitation of the voices is utterly ridiculous and impossible! Why would the Greeks have believed that their wives were there?"), and Porphyry's hyena's imitation of it is unlikely to raise its standing. The Greeks are spared the fate of the Indians, however, by the fast actions of Odysseus whose intelligence, and perhaps his particular empathy with his own wife, understood what was going on. By whatever route, however, this reached Porphyry, the lesson to be drawn is not just the pervasive influence of Homer all over Greek

culture, but rather the important truth that the shaping of stories to fit patterns inherited from Homer is not, of itself, an important criterion of truth status. Homeric poetry has come to provide a set of archetypes which confirm, rather than undermine, narrative credibility. If less starkly (and perhaps less amusingly) than Porphyry's hyena, the ancient novel shows a persistent debt to, particularly, the *Odyssey*, and the differences in the way in which the "centre" and the "fringe" handle that debt is a subject which would deserve further reflection in another place.

The effect of story-telling within novels (whether ancient or modern) always depends upon the social and generic conventions which operate within a particular literary tradition. The novels of such as Garcia Marquez (*100 Years of Solitude* etc.), Peter Carey and Salman Rushdie, for example, are filled with "stories", told both by the "fictional characters" of the works and in the voice of the narrator, whose "truth status" is problematic, and indeed problematised, within the whole fictional structure which constitutes the work. Crucial to this process is the fact that the "truth status" of the novel as a whole, in which the stories are set, may be itself actively made an issue for the reader in various ways. This is particularly foregrounded, of course, when the work in question is a version of "the historical novel", but such anxieties are by no means limited to this extreme case. Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* begins with two characters surviving a fall from a hijacked aircraft which is blown-up in mid-air, as if to say "this story is not true", but the book was, as Hesiod's Muses might have said, sufficiently "like truth" to have very unpleasant consequences for the author in the real world. So too, Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* are full of real characters and incidents in the history of India and Pakistan, but where "truth" and "fiction" begin and end is often neither easy (nor perhaps important) to identify, which is itself a truth about the Indian sub-continent which Rushdie is at pains to suggest, or perhaps rather to suggest that "western" notions of what constitutes "historical truth" are not necessarily appropriate for understanding the cultures of which he writes. The truth of social memory far transcends the "what really happened" question. I like to think that Australia too is such a country.

For the classicist there are here major issues about *mythos* and *logos* and about how ancient cultures used "history" (understood in the broadest sense from social memory to Thucydidean research) to define themselves; Herodotus, the almost unimaginably broad sweep of whose

narrative defies modern categorization, is perhaps the author most central to any such investigation, at least on the Greek side. To stay, however, with traditions of the novel—we are perhaps so familiar with the genre that we have lost some of the *frisson* of the illicit which goes with reading a prose narrative which floats in the realm of the imaginary; in antiquity, however, the association between prose and "truth", like its correlative of poetry and "falsehood", was remarkably persistent. Mythographic handbooks, such as the early imperial *Library* of Apollodorus, are a very good place to start thinking about ancient attitudes to this matter. To some extent it is this over-familiarity with fictional convention which has bred the post-modern reaction which stresses the role of the author and thus allows us to watch fiction in the making. Ian McEwan's *Atonement* is a familiar example: the second half of the novel seems to offer us access to a "true account" of the retreat towards Dunkirk (one based as we are subsequently reminded on original documents) and thus to the "true" ending of the novel, only for the author to turn around and bite us at the end by admitting that we have been given the ending we wanted. The link between what we want to believe and what we do believe is, of course, crucial to the psychology of literature and film (to go no further).

The proem of Lucian's *True Histories*, which may or may not belong to "the fringe", plays with our nagging sense (which itself we owe in large part to the *Odyssey*) that such first-person narratives should be true, or at least "true-ish". Lucian declares, no doubt with as much truth as anything else in the work, that his "plausible and credible" lies are all hits at the impossible fictions of earlier "travel" writers, a couple of whom he names, and that the person responsible for such charlatanry is Homer's Odysseus, who showed the way with his tall tales to the Phaeacians:

> On reading all these authors, I did not find much fault with them for their lying ... but I did wonder that they thought that they could write untruths without anyone noticing. Therefore, as I myself, thanks to my vanity, was eager to hand something down to posterity, that I might not be the only one excluded from the licence to make up stories (τῆς ἐν τῶι μυθολογεῖν ἐλευθερίας), and because I had nothing true to relate (ἀληθὲς ἱστορεῖν)—for nothing worthy of note had ever happened to me—I took to lying. But my lying is far more honest than theirs, for though I tell the truth in nothing else, I shall at least be truthful in declaring that I am lying. I think I can escape the censure of the world by my own admission that I am not telling a word of truth. Be it understood, then, that I am writing about things which I have neither seen nor experienced

> nor heard about from others—which, in fact, do not exist at all and, in the nature of things, cannot exist. Therefore my readers should on no account believe in them.
>
> Lucian, *VH* 1.4 (trans. Harmon, adapted)

Lucian's double bluff has, of course, something about it, not only of Socrates' famous explanation of the assertion of the Delphic oracle that no one was wiser than Socrates (if true it must refer to the fact that Socrates at least knew that he knew nothing), but also of the Cretan paradox—"all Cretans are liars", said the Cretan. Its importance in the history of ideas about fiction is however often overlooked, in part because it is dismissed as one more Lucianic joke, and in part because "science fiction" and the creation of "possible worlds" and other imaginative forms have blunted our sense of wonder. Lucian's declaration of "free composition" represents in fact a major step forward, regardless of whether it too is one big lie. Of course, we can trace ancestors for Lucian—Aristophanic plots, for example, are important here—but they do not, I think, alter the picture substantially. It is, of course, part of Lucian's bluff that what subsequently happens in that work never really tempts us to doubt the author's lack of veracity.

One modern work which evokes Lucian's and which may be of particular interest in this regard for the student of the ancient novel is Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), which presents itself as the first-person memoirs, written for a daughter he never met, of the famous outlaw (a man really *extra legem*) of Irish extraction who has passed into Australian mythology as the hero of the oppressed who stood up against corrupt "English" authority. The title of the novel evokes Lucian, but the careful reconstruction of "historical" incident, clearly based upon documentary and first-hand research (to which I shall return), and of a "historical" voice is utterly different from Lucian's jaunty tale-teller. Nevertheless, our willingness to believe (and the fact, I suggest, that we *want to* believe a tale of injustice and social corruption) is here knowingly called into question by the very title of the work. At one level, of course, Carey's work presents itself as the "true history", because it competes with all the other accounts and "legends" (and indeed films) which have grown up around Ned Kelly, but (paradoxically) the very label of truth challenges and unsettles us: one does not have to know Lucian to wonder just how much "truth" we are in fact being offered. Moreover, no history is probably

as "contested" as that of Ned Kelly, and any claim to "truth" will be received by any audience for what it is, precisely a claim and a partial one.

Here is the opening of Peter Carey's Ned Kelly's autobiography:

> I lost my own father at 12 yr. of age and know what it is to be raised on lies and silences my dear daughter you are presently too young to understand a word I write but this history is for you and will contain no single lie may I burn in Hell if I speak false.
>
> God willing I shall live to see you read these words to witness your astonishment and see your dark eyes widen and your jaw drop when you finally comprehend the injustice we poor Irish suffered in this present age. How queer and foreign it must seem to you and all the coarse words and cruelty which I now relate are far away in ancient time.
>
> Your grandfather were a quiet and secret man he had been ripped from his home in Tipperary and transported to the prisons of Van Diemen's Land I do not know what was done to him he never spoke of it.

Carey/Kelly urges us to believe in the "truth" of what we are going to read in a number of ways. Kelly's opening declaration of "no single lie" (contrast Lucian!), confirmed with the powerful sanction of burning in Hell, is the most obvious. So too, "I know … what it is to be raised on lies and silences" promises the end of "lies" as the silence too is broken and the book begins. Secondly, there is the anticipation of his daughter's (and hence all readers') reaction to the tale: Kelly knows that it is going to be hard to believe what he writes, but it is that very anticipation and foreshadowing which cuts off our disbelief. (A tale of "astonishment" and "suffering" takes us back in fact to standard ancient ideas about the effects of literature and indeed to the ancient novel). Moreover, the fact that these events happened "far away in ancient time" (in the novel Kelly's daughter was born, and may be presumed to have lived, in America), something which would normally increase our doubts as to their veracity, is here made confirmation of their truth. For Carey's readers, of course, the events related are indeed "far away in ancient time", and his daughter who, like so many "modern" Australians and Australian readers of the novel, lives in geographical exile from the land of their birth, comes to represent all readers; her *ekplêxis* will be theirs. In this way, the tale of a specific outlaw, though one with whom many "identify", gains general force: this is also the imagined story of a whole nation. The familiar historical context of the tale, namely the nineteenth-century injustices inflicted upon the Irish and Irish-Australians by the English (a clear case of

"fringe" and "centre"), is one which will clearly appeal to the implied readership of the novel, and hence confirm its truth.

Connected to the historical context of the novel is, of course, the fact that this is a first-person narration. As is well known, the "truth status" of such narrations is problematised in various ways in the ancient novel (Achilles Tatius, Petronius, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*): is there such a thing as "pure and unmediated recollection"? With Ned Kelly, it is always likely that there will be more than one story to tell, but Carey establishes his narrator's *bona fides* from the very beginning. Kelly is unable to relate things for which he has no evidence—such as what happened to his father on Van Diemen's Land; Kelly is thus not an "omniscient narrator", with a god-like command of narrative time, space, and event, though the narrative posture in fact breaks down from time to time in the course of the book. Such issues of narrative authority go back, of course, a very long way in antiquity: Homer famously makes Odysseus explain how he knows what went on in heaven (*Odyssey* 12.389–390). There are two further matters which are relevant to the fictional frames I have been considering: both may be considered as answers to the vital "How do *you* know" question? One lies both inside and outside the written text.

Carey makes sure (through the Acknowledgements page, which follows the main text) that we know that he has carried out first-hand, on the spot research in northern Victoria (he even has a "Research Assistant"), that he has read many books on the subject which have reminded him of "the facts", and that he had a wonderful editor who helped him produce a "tighter, truer (*sic*), better book"; most tellingly, of all, perhaps, he thanks several people who "all led me towards information that had previously eluded me". In other words, we are to understand not only that he writes with genuine authority, but that the "real truth" was out there lurking (like Ned Kelly on the run), trying (unsuccessfully) to avoid capture. As far as the novel tradition is concerned, there is no real parallel for this rhetoric in antiquity, but there is a close analogy in fiction's nearest brother, or perhaps uncle would be more accurate, the historiographical tradition, where, at least in the post-classical, i.e. post-Thucydidean period, the question of whether one should do one's own "battlefield" research was a very potent one: should one become oneself an Odysseus, travelling the world with an unlimited supply of curiosity, or should one let others do that, study their answers (both written and oral), and use Odysseus as a model for what one wrote, not for how one lived one's life? Polybius' savage attack

upon Timaeus is perhaps the best known example of this debate.[9] That Peter Carey is able to use the whole array of what modern critics of the novel have come to call "effects of the real", that incidental but persuasive (because well-researched) background of times, places, distances, and customs, in the pursuit of *fiction*, is an irony that would probably have been lost on Thucydides and Polybius, but it is one that we perhaps ought to relish.

The second part of the "How do *you* know?" question is answered by the fact that Carey also builds into his work an account of how Kelly's memoirs came to be written, to survive and be found. Here too ancient tradition shows the way, for the ancient novels often account for their existence (the so-called *Beglaubigungsapparat*) in ways which may or may not suggest an anxiety about "fiction"; texts were allegedly found secreted in libraries, washed up in caskets, or were preserved in local memory. It is worth noting that one of the third-person narrative texts which uses this device, Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesiaka* (at least in the state in which it survives to us), also spurns, as do (at one end of the spectrum) Homer and (at the other) the author of the *History of Apollonius, King of Tyre*, the introductory or closural *sphragis* of authorial authority, together with the awkward questions of historicity which such explicit naming brings. There is no "author" to get in the way of our access to "what happened"; naming oneself, as do, for example, Chariton and Heliodorus, is a responsibility which can act as guarantee: no one holds a pistol to the head of a nameless story-teller.[10]

The dichotomy of "centre" and "fringe" is thus (in more than one way) "good to think with"; in particular, it focuses attention upon issues of personal and group identity, which may be seen as just as important in ancient novels as they are in their modern descendants. What kind of fiction we read (and enjoy) says, after all, a great deal about who we think we are and (what is almost the same thing) what we count as "centre" and "fringe".

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[9] I have discussed some aspects of this in Hunter (2001).

[10] I have, however, occasionally wondered whether Xenophon's conclusion picks up the final sentence of Thucydides' (unfinished) history—"so Tissaphernes came first to Ephesus and sacrificed to Artemis"—thus claiming a particular kind of historical authenticity, while also signing-off as author with an intertextual grace-note of the kind which precisely calls attention to the activity of an author.

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Xenophon Ephesius, *Ephesiaca* 1.1–2 (172), 1.12 (92), 2.1.1–6 (110), 2.6.1 (111), 2.8.2 (116), 5.1 (109 n. 3), 5.4 (115), 5.14.1–2 (117), 5.15.3 (87)